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THE INDYPENDENT

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THE TIPPING POINT

editorial

It's no exaggeration to say that the next 12 months may be one of the most important years ever in America's history. The presidency of George W. Bush is unraveling, revealing a morass of deceit, corruption and gangsterism.

The war against Iraq has degenerated into a quagmire, as more and more GIs and Iraqis are fed into the meat grinder. It's a combination of imperial religious crusade and gun-slinging treasure hunt, like the Spanish Conquistadors wiping out the Aztecs and making off with a mountain of gold. Raids and detention camps are higher priorities than restoring water and electricity for Iraqi families.

These crusaders are doling out Iraq's resources to corporate cronies like Halliburton and Bechtel. The Iraqis have enough oil to fill the Grand Canyon, but the Americans are too busy trying to figure out who's shooting at them to get it flowing again, resulting in a gas shortage. A Halliburton unit is now shipping in gasoline to Iraq at \$1.62 a gallon (more than twice the going rate in the Middle East), and the Bush administration's Occupier-in-Command, Paul Bremer, is paying \$250 million a month for it, all with Iraqi oil money.

This endless "war against terror" spans the globe. In Colombia, those who speak out against injustice are brutalized by a death-squad regime armed, trained and financed by the United States. In Venezuela, the Republicans and

Democrats both conspire to oust the government of Hugo Chavez because he demands that the poor have a right to the nation's wealth. The Palestinians have been abandoned to the regime of terror Israel inflicts upon them daily. In Asia, Bush is heaping weapons on autocratic regimes that desperately want to portray homegrown conflicts over poverty and repression as battlegrounds in the terror war.

Americans are wondering why we've dished out more than \$160 billion for the Iraq War and are spending more on social programs in Iraq than back home. But that's the way of the Bushies. They've got trillions for the ultra-rich and a smack upside the head for the rest of us. We have been saddled with a declining economy and a massive federal deficit that the Republicans gleefully proclaim will "starve the beast"—bankrupt government.

But hope too is on the rise. The World Trade Organization was dealt what may be a terminal blow by people power in Cancun. Labor is shaking off its lethargy and organizing alongside activists to topple the Free Trade Area of the Americas summit next month in Miami. Bolivians have just tossed out a president who answered

more to the IMF than his own people.

Here at home, from the Battle of Seattle in December 1999 to the millions in the streets last Feb. 15 opposing the war and the Immigrant Workers Freedom Ride, we've seen the greatest outpouring of dissent in a generation.

Come next November, it's payback time. Bush's poll numbers have fallen faster than Saddam's statue. But King George and his court of crooks and charlatans are afraid of the power of dissent, and are shredding the Constitution to suppress it. They may still find a way to steal another election, with a little help from their friends who own the electronic voting machines. We can't afford that. But at the same time, we don't want to install a Democrat who offers me-too Republicanism.

For three years now, The Independent has been proud to be part of this growing independent people's movement. We know Americans are hungry for the truth and solutions, and not for celebrity politics and tabloid scandals.

Together, our collective power can create the tipping point for when the Bush presidency finally crumbles. We invite you to subscribe and join us for what will be an exciting year.

ILLUSTRATION: MICHAEL ULRICH

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WHAT IS INDYMEDIA?

With autonomous chapters in more than 100 cities throughout the world, the Independent Media Center is an international network of volunteer media activists.

The IMC seeks to create a new media ethic by providing progressive, in-depth and accurate coverage of issues. We are a community-based organization using media to facilitate political and cultural self-representation. We seek to illuminate and analyze issues affecting individuals, communities and ecosystems by providing media tools and space to those seeking to communicate. We espouse open dialogue and placing the means of communication and creativity back in the hands of the people, away from the drive of profit.

The Independent is funded by benefits, subscriptions, donations, grants and ads from organizations and individuals with similar missions.

WHAT CAN I DO TO GET INVOLVED?

The IMC has an open door. You can write for The Independent, film events and rallies, self-publish articles on the web, take photos or just help us run the office. As an organization relying entirely on volunteer support, we encourage all forms of participation.

The print team reserves the right to edit articles for length, content and clarity. We welcome your participation in the entire editorial process.

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A QUAGMIRE BY ANY NAME



PHOTO: ANDY STERN

By AK GUPTA

Welcome to the "West Bank on the Tigris" is how residents of Baghdad's Al-Tashree's neighborhood greet visitors these days. They've watched as Paul Bremer and other occupation officials have settled into the nearby Republican Palace and U.S. forces have enclosed the two-square-mile neighborhood in a 10-foot-high, 20-inch-thick concrete barrier, according to Agence-France Presse.

Traffic is funneled through a narrow opening where everyone and everything is searched by Iraqi police while a GI manning a machine gun atop a 60-ton tank keeps watch. The rationale is security, which is also supposed to explain the 10-foot-high mounds of dirt ringing Baghdad's center and why demonstrations cannot come within half a kilometer of military and occupation facilities.

Dina Saleh, an 18-year-old resident of Al-Tashree, fumes at the restrictions. "We are held captive. The Israelis surround Palestinians by a wall in the West Bank. Their mentors, the Americans, do the same in Baghdad."

This is no coincidence. U.S. forces have been studying Israeli tactics. The *Guardian* reported on April 2, "Close to 1,000 American soldiers were sent to Israel for joint maneuvers at the beginning of the year. Some were sent to a mock Arab town in the Negev desert to draw on Israeli experience..."

Some of that Israeli experience includes importing cheap labor from Asia to replace Palestinians who are considered a "security

risk." The *Financial Times* revealed on Oct. 16 that U.S. contractors are shipping in "South Asian labor to implement contracts, from prison-building to catering for U.S. troops."

"Iraqis are a security threat," says a Pakistani manager in Baghdad for the Tamimi Company ... which is contracted to cater for 60,000 soldiers in Iraq. "We cannot depend on them." The company employs 1,800 Pakistanis, Indians, Bangladeshis and Nepalese in its kitchens, and uses only a few dozen Iraqis for cleaning. (Tamimi, which admits to paying workers only \$3 a day, is a subcontractor for Halliburton subsidiary Kellogg Brown and Root.)

Overall, the Pentagon is employing the Israeli operational strategy of raids, wall-building, checkpoints, detentions and informants. And like the Israelis, U.S. forces are alienating the population. The difference is that Israel has so far been willing to sustain the costs of occupation because its very existence is based upon the theft of Palestinian land. The U.S. occupation is mainly about securing profits for Bush's corporate buddies and cheap oil for road-hogging Hummers.

So it would be a mistake to think that the U.S. occupation of Iraq is just a rerun of the Israeli occupation. In many ways the debate over the conflict centers on the most appropriate historical analogy for the U.S. conquest. Initially, White House officials promoted the "liberation of Iraq" as akin to the liberation of Paris from the Nazis. But there were no flower-strewn parades, popping champagne corks or cries of "Vive les

Americains!" Even the administration's true believers have stopped comparing Iraq to American-occupied Germany and Japan.

Comparisons to the Vietnam War are also surfacing with increasing frequency. But there are significant differences. Some 58,000 Americans died in Vietnam; less than one percent of that total, barely 340 Americans, has died to date in Iraq. The Vietnamese liberation movement received state support from the Soviets and Chinese; the Iraqi resistance is on its own, with Arab states cowed by U.S. might.

Yet if we think of Vietnam as a process, then the analogy becomes more apt.

Former Pentagon analyst Daniel Ellsberg calls the situation in Iraq "like Vietnam: a stale, hopeless occupation" that "could go on forever, no matter how unpopular it gets."

Just as presidential lies spurred U.S. involvement in Vietnam 40 years ago, so too did Bush's lies about Saddam Hussein push Congress into "signing a blank check," Ellsberg told the Associated Press.

As for the Iraqi resistance, many would like to replicate the Soviet-Afghanistan War. Jihadis want the Iraq conflict to catalyze a pan-Islamic unifying force to kick out the American invaders. They may well succeed. They may also revisit the aftermath of the Afghan struggle: years of bloody civil war as the heavily armed factions find their differences easier to shoot out than to talk out.

Israelis also caution that U.S. forces may find themselves repeating the Lebanon campaign. When Israel invaded Lebanon in 1982 there was little outright hostility to its presence among the large Shiite population. But over time, Israeli tactics alienated them, leading to the rise of Hezbollah and a low-intensity conflict that resulted in Israel's humiliating withdrawal in 2000.

In Iraq, while the Shiites are split into various political and religious factions, armed opposition is starting to coalesce, with two deadly gun battles having occurred between GIs and Shiites in recent weeks. The U.S. military's response, arresting clerics and raiding mosques, may make sense in the short run but it is traveling down a well-worn path.

In all these conflicts, the occupier's ability to endure the pain couldn't match the will of a people to resist an occupation. The question in Iraq is how long — and how many dead — will it take for the U.S. military and political establishment to come to that realization.

IRAQ'S T A T S



NUMBER OF IRAQI CIVILIANS KILLED:
in U.S./UK invasion: **Between 7,395 and 9,198**
(BBC, 10/7/03)

in Baghdad: **Between 1,700 and 2,356**
(*Guardian*, 6/13/03)
in the 1991 Gulf War: **2,278** (*Iraqi Government figure*)

NUMBER OF DEATHS PER DAY IN BAGHDAD:
last April: **10** (*Iraqi Body Count*)
as of mid-August: **28** (*ibid*)

NUMBER OF CHILDREN UNDER AGE 2 IN IRAQ WHO DIED DUE TO SANCTIONS BETWEEN 1990 AND 2003: 345,000 to 530,000 (*Village Voice*, 5/2/03)

NUMBER OF IRAQI CIVILIANS WOUNDED BY U.S. TROOPS PER DAY: 10-20 (*Times*, 9/15/03)

NUMBER OF ASSAULTS ON U.S. TROOPS SINCE GEORGE W. BUSH DECLARED AN END TO HOSTILITIES ON MAY 1, 2003: 1,000

NUMBER OF U.S. SOLDIERS KILLED IN IRAQ SINCE MAY 1: 103 (*BBC News*, 10/19/03)

NUMBER OF U.S. DEATHS ALTOGETHER: 336 (*CNN*, 10/17/03)

NUMBER OF U.S. SOLDERS KILLED IN BATTLE DURING THE FIRST GULF WAR: 148

NUMBER OF VETERANS OF THE FIRST GULF WAR WHO WENT ON TO DIE FROM SERVICE-RELATED INJURIES OR EXPOSURES: 8,013

NUMBER OF ACTIVE-DUTY U.S. TROOPS IN IRAQ: 150,000

INCREASE IN NUMBER OF CALLS THE GI RIGHTS HOTLINE HAS RECEIVED SINCE AUGUST: 75% (*Bring Them Home Now*, 10/9/03)

NUMBER OF THOSE REQUESTING INFORMATION ABOUT GOING AWOL: 100 (*ibid*)

PERCENTAGE OF IRAQIS OUT OF WORK: 70% (*Associated Press*, 10/15/03)



HOW MUCH THE UNITED STATES SPENDS EACH MONTH ON THE OCCUPATION: \$4 billion (*Forbes*, 7/15/03)

AMOUNT OF ADDITIONAL MONEY U.S. CONGRESS GRANTED BUSH TO FUND THE OCCUPATION IN OCTOBER: \$20 billion

AMOUNT THAT WAS TURNED FROM A GRANT INTO A LOAN AT THE LAST MINUTE AGAINST BUSH'S WISHES: 50%

AMOUNT OF ARMY CONTRACT TO HALLIBURTON: \$7 billion (*CNN Money*, 4/18/03)

NUMBER OF ADDITIONAL SCHOOTEACHERS WHO COULD BE HIRED WITH THE AMOUNT SPENT ON THE WAR AND OCCUPATION: 1,092,882 (*costofwar.com*)

ADDITIONAL AFFORDABLE HOUSING UNITS THAT COULD BE BUILT: 819,664 (*ibid*)



SINK OR SWIM: Soldiers from the 129th Transportation Company take a break while hauling recreational equipment across Iraq for their superiors.

MILITARY FAMILIES RAISE HELL

COURTESY OF REP. DENNIS MOORE'S OFFICE

BY JOHN TARLETON

Debbie Roath's husband Jeffrey was activated by the Army Reserves in January and was sent to the Middle East in April. While she has stayed home in Marshall, Missouri, to raise their five children, he has helped the 129th Transportation Company haul golf carts, motor boats and SUVs (as well as M1-70 Abrams tanks) across Iraq's dangerous highways.

Roath, 40, who voted for Bush in 2000, is now one of the leaders in a highly vocal online campaign to bring her husband's unit home.

"Our husbands' and our soldiers' lives are being put in danger," she says. "And I don't see any reason for that except greed."

As the United States first long-term occupation of another country since Vietnam becomes bloodier and more chaotic, military family members like Roath are beginning to raise their voices in the belief that supporting the troops ultimately means ending the war.

"I think it has a tremendous impact in how the anti-war movement is received by public and Congress," says Ben Chitty of Vietnam Veterans Against the War. "Family members and returning vets provide political credibility."

"It (the military families movement) is relatively small right now," adds Professor Robert Buzzanko, author of *Masters of War: Military Dissent and Politics in the Vietnam Era*. "But as more reserves get called in and more soldiers get killed, it can only grow. It's serious."

Buzzanko notes that President Lyndon Johnson repeatedly refused to call up the reserves at the height of the Vietnam War for fear of the social disruption it would cause. After Vietnam, the Pentagon set in place a political tripwire by reconfiguring its forces so that it would be impossible to carry out a military occupation without quickly resorting to large numbers of reserves to carry out day-to-day tasks — engineering, policing, medical support, transportation, public relations and civil administration.

The Bush administration crossed that threshold in mid-September when it announced that 20,000 reserves currently stationed in Iraq and Kuwait would have their overseas deployment extended from six months to 12 and that their total mobilization could be extended to a full 24 months.

Members of Congress were besieged with complaints from across the country. 129bringthemhome.com's online petition drive received 8,000 signatures overnight. The military brass openly speculated there would be a mass exodus of Guard and Reserve troops at the end of their current deployments.

"Extending arduous tours of duty in the middle of a deployment demonstrates not only poor planning, but a complete disregard for the families of service members who are already making tremendous personal and financial sacrifices," a former Navy recruiter wrote on 129bringthemhome.com.

At home, Roath tried to explain the situation to her five children. "They cried and they were angry. They don't understand why the military and our president lied to them."

Other military family members are also raising their voices.

Fernando Suarez del Solar of Escondido, California, started Fundación Guerrero Azteca this spring after the Marines refused to pay the full burial costs for his son Jesús, who was killed by an unexploded cluster bomb one week into the war. Guerrero Azteca assists other Spanish-speaking families with burial costs and with psychological counseling. Suarez has since traveled to Baghdad and spoken before Congress as a passionate critic of the war.

"In war there are no winners, only victims," he says. "They [the troops] are the first victims of this crime."

Kimberly Huff, 32, is one of the leaders of the 437th Medical Company's Family Readiness Group (FRG), which helps military families cope with the day-to-day stress of deployment. Military officials usually attend the FRG's monthly get-togethers. They admonish family members not to talk about the war with the press lest they "compromise the mission."

"I think the first reaction of most people is to obey," Huff says.

Huff's response: she wears T-shirts that say, "My husband is a political prisoner in Bush's army" and regularly speaks out at local anti-war rallies.

"I don't want people to forget about our troops," says Huff, who will mark her second wedding anniversary on Nov. 29. "They're still over there. And they need to come home."

Huff's one-woman campaign extends

to the freeways of Southern California where passing motorists can read the yellow chalk messages on all five windows of her Chevy Blazer.

"I get all sorts of honks and waves of approval as I drive the freeways," Huff says. "I had one woman approach me in the parking lot the other day and say, 'I thought the war was over but I guess I was wrong.'"

Adele Kubein, 50, writes letters constantly to local newspapers and to her elected representatives. Her daughter joined the Oregon National Guard five years ago. She already had wildland firefighting experience and needed money to finish college. When Kubein asked her daughter if she was sure she wanted to join, she replied, "Oh, Mom, there's never going to be another war." Now she finds herself stationed in the northern city of Mosul where her unit comes under nightly mortar and sniper fire.

"A lot of those guys had never prepared for something like this," Kubein notes. "They were supposed to build roads and fight fires in Oregon, not be killing kids or getting shot at all the time."

Last November, Nancy Lessin and Charley Richardson started Military Families Speak Out (MFSO—www.mfso.org) after their son was deployed to the Persian Gulf with the Marines. The Internet-based advocacy group's list serve has since grown to more than a thousand members.

"We get so many emails from people who say 'Thank God I found you because I thought I was the only person connected with the military who felt like this,'" Richardson says.

Richardson, 50, expects scores of MFSO members to turn out for a massive Oct. 25 anti-war mobilization in Washington, D.C. Still, he acknowledges dissent among military families remains the exception not the rule.

"It's very hard to believe that your loved one is in harm's way for no good reason," Richardson says. "It's easier psychologically to believe in the war."



FRUSTRATION: Kimberly Huff of Fullerton, CA waits for her husband Roger to return from the Iraq war



ANDREW STERN/INDYMEDIA

"WHY ARE WE STILL HERE?": GIs SPEAK OUT

BY IMC STAFF

With the growth of the Internet, soldiers no longer have to wait weeks or months for letters to wend their way to and from the front lines; they can just dash off an email. But what's good for the grunt isn't sauce for the commander. The flurry of soldiers' electronic missives has opened the window to a military seething with discontent. Troops are angry at the pitiful living conditions in Iraq, angry at feeling abandoned, angry at being shot at, and most of all, angry at their superiors who are safely ensconced in luxury.

Comments from the boots on the ground are posted and passed around on the Internet samizdat-style. They are a counterbalance to the gung-ho warriors handpicked by the brass to speak their unbridled enthusiasm for Operation Iraqi Freedom to the public. Following is a sample of what soldiers are saying.

The website traveling-soldier.org has collected many comments.

"I've got my own 'Most Wanted' list. The aces in my deck are Paul Bremer, Donald Rumsfeld, George Bush, and Paul Wolfowitz."

— Anonymous Sgt., 2nd Battle Combat Team, 3rd Infantry Brigade, stationed at BCT's HQ.

"What are we getting into here? The war is supposed to be over, but every day we hear of another soldier getting killed. Is it worth it? Saddam isn't in power anymore. The locals want us to leave. Why are we still here?"

— Anonymous Sgt., 4th Infantry Division.

"We're more angry at the generals who are making these decisions and who never hit the ground, and who don't get shot at or have to look at the bloody bodies and the burnt-out bodies, and the dead babies and all that kinda stuff."

— Spc. Anthony Castillo, Third Infantry Division.

The *Army Times* newspaper has become a soapbox for discontented troops. First Lt. Eric Rahman, writing from Camp Doha, Kuwait, states that "quality of life is at an all-time low." One wife of a national guardsman deployed in Baghdad pleaded in a letter to the *Army Times*: "Please send our troops home."

Even the Pentagon's official organ, *Stars and Stripes*, has been forced to pay attention. It notes that of 200 letters it printed between June and September 2003 from troops in Iraq and Kuwait, about 60 percent "complained about various things, ranging from living conditions and problems with mail to redeployment dates back home."

Stars and Stripes sent three teams of reporters to Iraq to interview the troops and published a seven-day-long series of dispatches. They also conducted a survey of nearly 2,000 troops about living conditions. One report observed, "Some troops live like princes, while others sleep in the sand."

A number of letter writers have criticized officers who are rotating home while their troops remain in Iraq. One former GI writes, "This is the same stupid policy we had in Vietnam." A frequent complaint is a lack of or poor-quality equipment. One sergeant writing from Germany states, "About 95 percent of my unit uses money out of his own pocket for special gear because basic issue doesn't meet our expectations."

The Australian Broadcasting Corporation reported receiving an email from a soldier in Iraq complaining that while the troops "look like hobos and live like pigs"... those running Iraq are more concerned with "hooking up with nice-looking gals from U.S. and Iraq." He says for staff at the headquarters, their biggest problem is running out of Coke and Diet Coke to go with their steak and crab leg dinner.

THE CONFESSIONS OF ST. BILL



Come unto me, my lost Democratic flock. For three years you have wandered the desert, drinking the bitter ichor of Republican policies. Torment has been thy bread, fed by the wicked hands of King Dub-ya who worships only the false idol Mammon.

But do your eyes bear the mark of misty-eyed nostalgia? Do not exalt me nor yearn for my days among you that the faithful call "The Clinton Years."

Forsooth, I deserve only your curses, for my heart is heavy with wickedness. I have sinned against you and I visit to deliver The Confessions of Saint Bill.

My transgressions were multiple even before I was inaugurated as your High Priest. I was craven before the Pentagon as I sacrificed my gay and lesbian followers upon the altar of "Don't Ask, Don't Tell." (And don't ask me about Lani Guinier.)

I came preaching the gospel of healing, and the multitudes cried, "National Health Care." Again, I sinned and bedded with the wicked Insurance Companies, bringing defeat and devastation. My betrayal added to the millions with no healing. Most lamentably, I delivered our temple of Congress to a grievous swarm of Republicans.

But this was just the beginning of my sinful ways. I promised thee much, but flip-flopped like a great sea beast on land.

I said, "Behold jobs programs!" but my hands were empty. I spoke of raising fuel efficiency standards, and watched them fall. I preached helping welfare recipients but pitched 2 million women and children off the rolls and into squalor and misery. I told labor their suffering was over, but did naught to lessen their onerous burden to gain new followers.

I failed, my fortitude was lacking, my spirit weak.

I said I would protect HIV-positive immigrants, but con-

tinued their persecution. I spoke mighty words for a Freedom of Choice act but never fought for it. I said I would preserve the pastures and forests and waters and creatures within, instead I delivered them unto multitudinous tribes of developers.

I was too covetous of my political capital to ever do anything with it. I recited the verses of Tough on Crime, Pro-Death Penalty, War on Drugs. My reign saw those in chains increase from 1 million to 2 million.

I preached Free Trade. I worshiped Wall Street.

I have hidden my shame behind Dick Morris' polls too long. I counseled I had to assume the guise of Republicans to win the coveted "General Election," but then I would reward your patience.

Instead, the only ones I rewarded were those of endless avarice and malice. I bore the Telecommunications Act that gave the media unto the richest few. I skulked in the night to deliver a death blow to the Glass-Steagall Act, allowing the greatest Ponzi scheme in history or what the wizards name the "Tech Bubble."

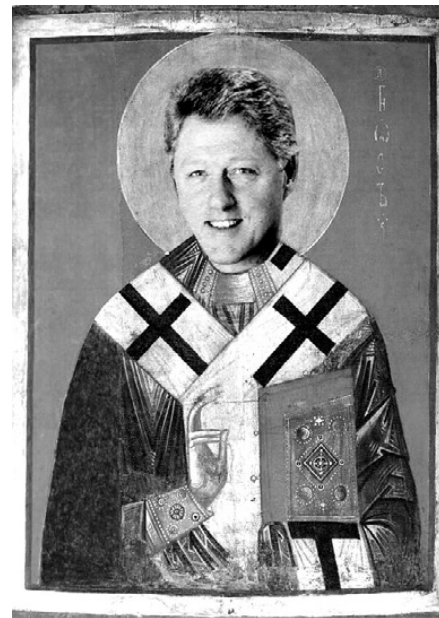
I, Saint Bill, gave the government to the rich. Not the Republicans.

Do not be shocked my friends. You knew this all along.

But there are even greater sins of which to speak. I joined the secret Order of the Establishment and pledged to uphold the serpent's policy of "International Bi-Partisanship."

I wandered to far-off lands and committed the wickedest of deeds. I let death squads slaughter the Haitians, then gave the criminal leaders sanctuary.

My sins were multiplied a hundredfold in already sorrowful Africa. I destroyed a pharmaceutical factory in Sudan. I killed



thousands in a "humanitarian mission" to Somalia. Most shamefully, I abandoned 1 million in Rwanda to a plague of machetes. I fashioned Plan Colombia. I bombed Serbia. I let the Indonesians seek their vengeance on East Timor.

I have to answer for their souls as well as the half-million Iraqi children who died from sanctions enforced by me, your once exalted leader.

I ask not your forgiveness, for I have no shame. Instead, I ask that in your righteous desire to cast out the perfidious and treacherous King Dub-ya that you do not follow another who would continue my shameful ways.

— AK



DEAN

"We cannot lose the peace in Iraq."



KERRY

"People keep asking, 'What's the exit strategy?' The exit strategy is victory."

ELECTIONS

DEMOCRATS FAKE LEFT, RUN RIGHT THE WAR PARTY

BY JED BRANDT

The Democrats aren't just a minority party; they have been effectively pushed out of every branch of government. Both houses of Congress, the majority of governorships — including such Democratic bastions as New York and California — the White House and the judiciary are now solidly Republican.

Despite this, the Democrats still aren't an opposition. Loyal? To the core. Opposition? Not a drop.

"People keep asking about an exit strategy. The exit strategy is victory," said Democratic presidential candidate John Kerry about the war in Iraq. Himself a Vietnam veteran, Kerry has since taken to channeling the hellbound spirit of Richard "Peace With Honor" Nixon.

"We have to de-Americanize this war, we have to take the target off of American troops as fast as possible," Kerry argues. How do "we" do this? America needs "to bring other countries in to take the burden."

Good idea! Why should Americans die for oil when we could just get Turkish conscripts to do it for us?

"Internationalization" has become the Democratic strategy of seeming to oppose the war while in fact arguing for a more effective way to win the Bush Wars. All of the major Democratic candidates, except Lieberman who's a Bush-style unilateralist, have taken up "internationalization."

But what about peacenik Howard Dean? Isn't he bravely standing up to end the war and bring the troops home? Not quite.

Despite being a darling of *The New York Times* for his Northeastern roots and lack of

redneck charm, Dean is bullish on state executions, championed Clintonian welfare reform while governor of Vermont and supports the occupation of Iraq. With clever, pugnacious rhetoric, Dean has fostered a reasonable facade to his embrace of empire.

"I believed from the beginning that we should not go into Iraq without the U.N. as our partner. We cannot do this by ourselves. We have to have a reconstruction of Iraq with the United Nations, with NATO, and preferably with Muslim troops, particularly Arabic-speaking troops from our allies such as Egypt and Morocco," says Dean.

So he's supporting internationalization as well? Not quite.

"We cannot have American troops serving under U.N. command," Dean says. "But we can have American troops serving under American command, and it's very clear to me that in order to get the U.N. and NATO into Iraq, this president is going to have to go back to the very people he humiliated, our allies, on the way into Iraq, and hope that that they will now agree with us that we need their help there."

In other words, the United States needs to enlist the United Nations to provide political cover and get them to fight under American command, whether citizens of member nations support this war or not.

Dean has even hinted that Iraq may need even more American troops. When asked if the United States should do what the Iraqis clearly want and just leave, Dean said, "We can't do that. We cannot lose the peace in Iraq. This situation was created by Bush, who ignored the greater danger in Iran and North Korea and Al-Qaeda at home to do it. This

was a mistake, this war."

That's right. Dean thinks the United States invaded the wrong country. The Afghanistan occupation, however, he supports loudly without reservation.

When asked at the Democratic candidate's debate in New York City whether he would support Bush's \$87 billion request for the occupation, Dean threw down, "We have no choice, but it has to be financed by getting rid of all the president's tax cuts. Even though I did not support the war in the beginning, I think we have to support our troops."

How's that for populism?

But hold up! What about Kucinich? Isn't he holding the working-man's banner? Doesn't Kucinich support a Department of Peace and want to end the war? Well, sure. Kind of.

"I think Senator Kerry described well the direction we should be going in." That's right, it's "internationalization" again.

The Rev. Al Sharpton has opposed the war, even if no one seems to care. He has, however, promised to personally lead the crusade to capture Osama bin Laden. (Look out Geraldo Rivera, the Rev is coming to town!)

It's easy to blame Clinton's DLC clones until we crack a peek into the horrors of history. Vietnam was a Democratic war. Hiroshima a Democratic atrocity. We can go back to the World War I, when Woodrow Wilson broke his pledge to stay out of the conflict by creating America's first permanent standing army.

What the Democrats offer in spades is a different vocabulary. Bush talks to the cowboys, Clinton to the rest of us. But speaking to us is a far cry from speaking for us.

MONEY MACHINE: THE BUSH PUSH FOR A ONE-PARTY STATE

BY SANJAY KUMAR

Newsflash! The rich favor Bush over all the other presidential candidates. Okay, no one's going to be surprised that his backers are mostly millionaires and Fortune 500 companies. It's also no secret that the 2004 Bush/Cheney campaign's goal is to raise \$200 million prior to the Republican National Convention next August (an amount it will probably far surpass). But the fundraising juggernaut Bush has in place makes a mockery of campaign finance laws and is openly based on a cycle of soliciting contributions from the rich in return for lucrative paybacks for future contributions and more paybacks.

As of Oct. 15, 2003, Bush's 2004 campaign reported to the Federal Election Commission that it had raised \$84.5 million. Seventy-four percent of that comes from 29,788 donors who gave at least \$2,000 – a greater percentage than any of the nine Democrats running for president. In contrast Howard Dean, who is the leading Democratic fundraiser at \$25.3 million, gets only 13 percent of his take from such mega-donors.

Virtually every sector of corporate America is giving far more to Bush and the Republicans than the Democrats. And most of that money is funneled through the Bush campaign's network of super-fundraisers – Pioneers and Rangers – that includes many of the wealthiest Americans and captains of industry.

The money is given for quid pro quos from the White House in the form of trillion-dollar tax cuts, elimination of overtime pay, corporate subsidies, relaxed pension-fund rules, looser federal regulation, or outright gifts, such as mineral and timber rights on public lands.

Craig Aaron of Public Citizen's Congress Watch calls the influence of corporations in campaign financing "pervasive." He says, "Corporations are spending millions of dollars on trying to influence elections. The return on their investment pales in comparison to what they put in."

Wall Street has taken the lead as Bush's biggest backer. Of the 285 individuals identified as Rangers, who bundle \$200,000 in contributions to qualify, or Pioneers, who must raise \$100,000, 56 are from the finance industry.

Their roster is weighted with Wall Street titans – E. Stanley O'Neal, chair, CEO and president of Merrill Lynch, Henry M. Paulson, Jr., chair of Goldman Sachs, Thomas A. Renyi, chair and CEO of the Bank of New York, John Mack, CEO of Credit Suisse First Boston, James E. Cayne, chair and CEO of Bear Stearns, Henry

Kravis, founding partner of Kohlberg, Kravis, Roberts.

Part of this monetary outpouring is in return for the cuts in estate, dividend and capital gains taxes that benefit these tycoons to the tune of hundreds of millions of dollars. These cuts "are just the first step in a push toward making all investment income tax-free," notes Public Citizen.

Wall Street's wish list for a second Bush term is said to include deterring "further regulation of hedge funds, derivatives trading and arcane, highly profitable tax-avoidance schemes... remodeling the retirement and pension systems to drive more business to stockbrokers, limiting class-action lawsuits and, ultimately, privatizing Social Security."

Another 49 Rangers and Pioneers are identified as lawyers and lobbyists and represent professional influence peddlers whose "job is to have access," says Aaron. Insurance and energy companies are also big supporters. Bush pushed through the terrorism insurance bill, which essentially has the federal government assume the role traditionally held by reinsurance companies, and he has relentlessly pushed "tort reform" that would benefit insurance companies at the expense of consumers by limiting class-action suits and imposing monetary caps.

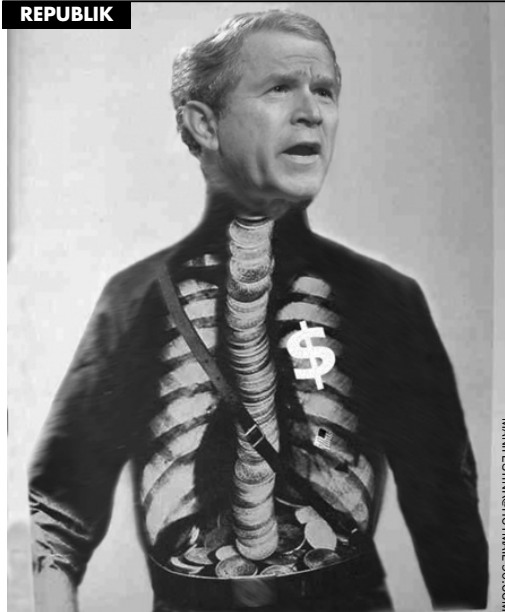
Many big donors are also the wealthiest Americans. At least 12 Rangers and Pioneers were listed in 2002 as being among Forbes 400 richest Americans. It's not hard to understand why the rich support Bush: there's the repeal of the estate tax, as well as the massive tax cuts skewed to the top tier.

"The tax policies that the Bush Administration has pursued directly benefit the wealthiest one percent," argues Aaron. "The folks who can write those \$1,000 checks are a very small and very wealthy portion of society."

That the system is broken is undeniable. Aaron calls the \$200 million fundraising goal a "lowball" estimate, saying the Bush campaign is "raising it at double that rate." But once the general campaign starts in September, "Bush will go back into the public financing system and get something like \$74 million." These totals don't include money from the Republican Party and outside spending by advocacy groups.

The Bush campaign's strategy is clear. With an unpopular war and stagnant economy, the Republicans' only hope is to bury the Democratic nominee under a blizzard of attack ads and dirty tricks. It wouldn't be the first time it's been tried – or succeeded.

REPUBLIC



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DIEBOLD TRIES TO MUZZLE VOTE FRAUD CRITICS

BY IMC STAFF

Diebold Election Systems, Inc., manufacturer of electronic voting systems which have recently been shown to have major security problems, has begun using the 1998 Digital Millennium Copyright Act to silence online critics who have posted links to leaked company memos. Dozens of Internet service providers (ISPs) have complied with cease-and-desist letters sent out by the company that asks ISPs to take down client pages that link to the memos.

The leaked memos indicate Diebold has been careless (or worse) about test runs, accuracy audits and security for its voting machines.

According to the Electronic Frontier Foundation, the Online Policy Group (OPG), appears to have been the only ISP that has refused to comply with the notice. OPG is a nonprofit that donates Internet services to San Francisco Indymedia. The Electronic Frontier Foundation has stepped in to defend OPG and Indymedia against Diebold, which asserts that the material is "Diebold Property . . . being publicly displayed . . . without Diebold's consent." Indymedia believes that "journalists and the public have a right to evaluate the legitimacy of these memos and their import on the security of our democratic process."

While other targets of the letter have complied, much of the information has been posted to smaller, subtler targets such as peer-to-peer networks. Web sites such as Scoop.co.nz have also posted the material.

Questions about the integrity of Diebold's systems have not gone unnoticed. Representative Tammy Baldwin (D-Wisc.) has signed on to a house resolution 2239, which would require a voter-verified permanent record or hardcopy to be used with any electronic voting system. Currently, Diebold systems produce no such record for either the voter or for the polling staff to verify the accuracy of the votes cast.

Moreover, a recent study performed by computer security researchers at Johns Hopkins University determined that AccuVote machines are vulnerable to hackers, multiple votes and vote-switching. The AccuVote-TS systems are regular desktop computers running Microsoft Windows, which by its nature increases the system's vulnerability. But the problems only begin there.

According to Bev Harris, author of Black Box Voting, tests done on the software originally downloadable from Diebold's website showed the existence of numerous backdoors in the vote counting system that enables those with access to manipulate the tabulation of results in real time as they are coming in, without any trace that they were ever there.

The 3 major manufacturers of the voting computers—Diebold, Election Systems & Software (ES&S) and Sequoia Voting Systems—all have Republican Party links. Wally O'Dell, Diebold CEO and top Bush fundraiser, has publicly committed himself to "delivering" his home state of Ohio to Bush in 2004. Part of the agreement the companies insist on before selling to any state is the right for the seller to tally votes. This eliminates state electoral commissions as one of the fundamental safeguards of the voting system.

For more information, please see www.blackboxvoting.org and www.indymedia.org/display.php3?article_id=356465&group=webcast

WHEN BUSH COMES TO SHOVE... WHERE DO YOU TURN FOR NEWS?

Naomi Klein says *The Independent* "mixes the spirit of direct action with a searing critique of corporate power." Drawing upon the global network of Indymedia Centers, we let people speak for themselves – from the streets of Baghdad to the jungles of Colombia, the shanty towns of South Africa to the villages of East Timor. We look at those resisting the Pentagon and Wall Street reign of terror, from the fight at home for housing, quality education and civil liberties to the broader struggle against corporate globalization. Don't miss an issue – subscribe today!



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RED HERRINGS & HUMAN RIGHTS

By CHRIS ANDERSON

The latest evidence of the shrinking ideological gap between liberal and conservatives comes in the form of an Oct. 19 *New York Times* article. Headlined "What It Takes to Be a Neo-Neoconservative," it regurgitates the pseudo-liberal humanitarian arguments for invading Iraq. This time, the arguments are trotted out to justify a continuing U.S. occupation.

The author was scholar and neo-imperialist Michael Ignatieff, only slightly behind Christopher Hitchens in pro-war enthusiasm, but beyond him when it comes to nuanced argument.

Human rights alone, Ignatieff argued before the war, were enough to justify the Iraqi invasion. "Would you prefer to have Bremer in Baghdad or Saddam Hussein?" he asked in the Oct. 19 *Times*. "For me the key issue is what would be the best result for the Iraqi people — what is most likely to improve the human rights of 26 million Iraqis?"

The divide between liberals and conservatives on human rights is fading — fast. The kind of sentiment expressed by Ignatieff and others wouldn't be out of place at a Richard Perle policy briefing.

Unfortunately, left-wing opponents of the war haven't started to grapple with this fact in any meaningful way. When pressed on Hussein's miserable human rights record, they usually remind listeners about American complicity in his reign of terror and then quickly change the subject.

Let's push the matter even further. There is compelling evidence that life in Iraq life hasn't improved meaningfully under the allied occupation. Religious fundamentalism is on the rise, women's rights are under increasing threat, and Paul Bremmer and the rest of the Coalition Provisional Authority seem to have no qualms about shutting down newspapers and gagging Iraqi dissidents as they see fit.

But even if we agree with Ignatieff's argument that ordinary Iraqis really are "better off," the war was a disaster anyway. By granting proponents of the invasion and occupation this point, we can move beyond it into other areas that are even less conducive to proving the pro-war case.

In short: most Americans supported the war because Bush and his henchmen consistently claimed that Iraq had weapons of mass destruction and was tied to al-Qaeda, Americans did not countenance a pre-emptive invasion because of Iraqi mass graves.

How do Bush's prewar claims stack up? For starters, the Iraq war actually made weapons more available to anti-U.S. militants, not less, according to *The New York Times*. It reports that U.S. forces in Iraq are unable to locate a large number of shoulder-fired anti-aircraft missiles. Given the porous Iraq border, it's entirely possible that some of these missiles are in the hands of anti-Western militants, compromising security for air travel around the world.

Even worse, because of the post-war chaos, IAEA officials are unable to account for hundreds of radioactive materials used in research and medicine across Iraq.

There's also every reason to believe that the Iraq war is making us less secure. The International Institute for Strategic Studies recently issued a report concluding that the war "has probably inflamed radical passions among Muslims and thus increased al-Qaeda's recruiting power and morale and, at least marginally, its operating capability."

The bottom line? Americans are now less safe than they were before the Iraq war. The left shouldn't be afraid to argue that it's difficult to justify a pre-emptive invasion, for humanitarian reasons or not, that actually decreases the security of everyday Americans.



HAPLESS PRISONERS IN A BLACK HOLE

THE DISGRACE THAT IS GUANTANAMO

By ELAINE CASSEL

I started to write about the disgraceful situation in Guantanamo Bay, Cuba on Friday morning, Oct. 10. I had read about the Bush administration's continued detention of 650 or more prisoners, some of them juveniles, captured in Afghanistan two years ago. They have been held in cages on the American military base at Guantanamo, without attorneys, with little access to family, and without any charges being placed against them.

Before the war in Iraq fell apart, we heard that Paul Wolfowitz was planning to be in charge of trying some of the men. Several prisoners were targeted to be the guinea pigs for prosecution and, of course, they were facing the death penalty. But it turned out that one or more of those were British subjects.

Tony Blair stepped in and, with support for his wholesale commitment to Bush's war waning, begged Bush not to execute any British citizens. That's the last we heard from Guantanamo, until this week when we heard from the Red Cross. Men are trying to commit suicide, repeatedly, while prisoners' physical and mental health are deteriorating. One wonders what the hell we are doing down there — and the answer is probably nothing.

It's just as well I did not get the article written Friday morning. For on Friday afternoon, driving home, I heard that Bush may now be planning our next war in Cuba. Whether that materializes or not, he was placing new restrictions on Americans visiting Cuba, threatening tourists with criminal prosecution on the grounds that taking money to Cuba was "money laundering for terrorists."

I swear that is what he said. Because I pulled over to the side of the road and wrote it down. So being a friend to Cuban people or a fan of Cuban music — well, in the administration's Alice-in-Wonderland world, that makes you a terrorist, too.

So the Bush administration is, I guess, going to try to get all the Cubans here who want to get here, and do what it can to destabilize Cuba so that the Cubans left there will be as desperate as the Iraqis are now. Of course, we know the reason why. Bush needs desperately to win Florida in 2004. He's counting on this invitation to Cubans in Cuba to win the votes of the Cubans in Miami already there.

So it is all about politics. Politics as usual. And the Bush administration's politics is, at the core, destructive of civil rights and human rights. In fact, that appears to be its one of its

main agendas — destruction of human rights. It has already done a damn fine job of destroying civil rights.

At his press briefing yesterday, Scott McClellan, the White House press secretary who makes Ari Fleischer look like a genius, said that the President "rejects" the report of the Red Cross about the horrible treatment of people in Guantanamo. Rejects it. What the heck does that mean? We just don't listen to it? We don't care what the international community thinks of us? It's irrelevant? We are not going to read it?

Then I heard an attorney on NPR Friday night boast that "we" had to treat the prisoners that way. After all, they caused the September 11 attacks. Honestly, that is what he said! What? You can be sure if they were even remotely connected to September 11 they would have been brought to trial, in public, and be awaiting death now. Sadly, the interviewer did not question him about his statement. How many listeners heard it and assumed it to be the truth? How many, like me, heard it and were incensed at the lie of it?

As for the prisoners of Guantanamo, their chaplain and at least two of their translators have been locked up in military prisons, at least one of them charged with treason. Their crimes so far have been enumerated as serving baklava to prisoners, having e-mails on their computers intended for prisoners' families, and having "maps" of their cells.

If the government could, it would charge them with the crime of kindness to fellow human beings or treating prisoners humanely. It can't do that, so it trumps up charges to make those who try to help them look like terrorists themselves. All this, when the prisoners have not themselves been shown to be terrorists.

So, in an administration where irony is too subtle a term, we have George Bush opening up the shores of Florida to Cubans who will, as soon as they can, become citizens and vote for him and his brother. In the meantime, the Cuban lobby in Florida will see that Bush carries Florida. By hook or crook.

At the same time, we have Bush presiding over the wholesale mistreatment, even torture, some say, of upwards of 700 men who have not been shown to have done anything wrong — except to have been on the streets of Afghanistan when Bush wanted to act like a cowboy and get "somebody" for 9-11.

I guess there is nothing we can do about any of this except face the fact that the Bush administration is, at its core, a cruel, hateful

and mean bully of a government. To put it in psychological terms, it is sociopathic — lacking in empathy, self-absorbed, acts with a sense of entitlement, hatred of all but self, and with total disregard for the rights of others. Bush will, I fear, get what he wants — one way or the other. Sociopaths do that.

In the meantime, the Supreme Court has been asked to review a federal appeals court ruling that forecloses federal courts from

>> We have Bush presiding over the wholesale mistreatment, even torture, some say, of upwards of 700 men who have not been shown to have done anything wrong except to have been on the streets of Afghanistan when Bush wanted to act like a cowboy and get "somebody" for 9-11.

hearing the pleas of the Guantanamo prisoners. The lower courts agreed that the federal courts had no jurisdiction because the prisoners are not on American soil. How's that for a catch-22. We arrested them, brought them to a U.S. military base, classified them as "enemy combatants" so as to try to exempt them (and us) from international law, the laws of war, and U.S. law, and now we have declared them to be outside of the law. I guess, in a sick and twisted way, that does make some sense after all.

For the hapless prisoners in the black hole of Guantanamo comes a voice from the past to file a friend of the court brief in their behalf: Fred Korematsu, an American citizen of Japanese descent who refused to enter a Japanese internment camp in California 60 some years ago. He was prosecuted, convicted, and imprisoned for challenging the internment order. The Supreme Court then said it was just fine that he was ordered to be locked up, and even finer that he was prosecuted for challenging the order.

In his brief he begs the court to respect the fundamental principle that those deprived of liberty have the right to a fair hearing. Doubtless, the Supreme Court will follow its leader and "refuse to accept" Korematsu's plea. After all, what do fairness, justice, and decency have to do with anything anymore?

Elaine Cassel practices law in Virginia and Washington, D.C. This article originally appeared on *CounterPunch.org*.

WALMART GETS RICH OFF 'DEAD PEASANTS'



BY TONY PECINOVSKY

Across the country, WalMart is cashing in on family tragedies. Doug Sims, a WalMart employee in Plainview, Texas, died of a heart attack in 1998. After Doug's death, his wife Jane Sims found out exactly what WalMart meant when they described their employees as "valuable assets."

When Doug was hired, WalMart purchased a \$64,000 life insurance plan on him. WalMart, like many other major corporations, routinely purchases policies on its employees – without consent – and then cashes in, tax-free, on the value of the life insurance when the employee dies. Technically, the practice is called "Dead Peasant" insurance. And WalMart currently maintains around 350,000 "Dead Peasant" insurance policies.

WalMart, the largest retailer in the world, employing over 1.4 million "associates" in 3,400 shopping centers, earns \$130 billion in yearly sales revenue. The colossus controls more wealth than 90 percent of the countries across the globe.

WalMart's sales for the first quarter of 2003 were \$56.7 billion. While \$64,000 doesn't seem like a lot when compared to such staggering numbers, the betrayal felt by the families involved has no price tag.

According to the United Food and Commercial Workers Union (UFCW), WalMart not only makes money off of dead employees; it also makes profits off the backs of its living "associates." On average, WalMart associates are paid \$3 less per hour than employees in unionized shopping centers.

According to a 2002 Institute for Women's Policy Research report "union-represented workers in supermarkets earn thirty-one percent more than their non-union counterparts... are two-and-a-half times as likely to

have pension coverage [and] twice as likely to have health insurance coverage" than employees who aren't represented by a union.

Also according to the report, the average wage in retail shopping centers for union members is \$10.35, while the average wage for workers not represented by a union is \$7.62.

As one of the largest unions in the country, the UFCW has won living wages, better health and vacation packages, and standardized grievance procedures for its members, ensuring employees a voice in their workplace and job security. In national shopping centers like Shnucks and Dierbergs, where UFCW represents employees, living wages, retirement and healthcare plans are the norm.

In WalMart, on the other hand, nearly half of all employees earn poverty wages. Thirty five percent have no retirement plan, and 700,000, of WalMart's 1.4 million associates, have no healthcare.

But that's not all. Former WalMart employees have sued the retail giant for forced unpaid overtime. Many more are suing because of discrimination. And hundreds of women are suing WalMart over promotion and pay inequality.

According to the union, WalMart was sued 4,851 times in 2000, "about once every two hours, every day of the year." And WalMart faces 38 state and federal lawsuits, in 30 states, accusing the company of forced overtime.

In a class action lawsuit in Texas, on behalf of 200,000 current and former WalMart employees, statisticians estimate that WalMart underpaid its employees by \$150 million over a four-year period. In a Colorado lawsuit WalMart paid \$50 million to 69,000 former and current employees for forced unpaid overtime.

From 1998 through 2000 the National

Labor Relations Board filed more than forty complaints accusing WalMart of illegal practices, including firing union supporters, threatening bonuses, spying, and coercing employees.

While the UFCW primarily concerns itself with wages and benefits, the union also charges WalMart with driving smaller competitors out of business and causing job loss. According to the union, "three existing jobs are destroyed for every two jobs created at WalMart."

All across small-town America, where WalMart stores are mostly located, community businesses have been forced to shut down. WalMart's purchasing power, which equals 56 percent of the entire retail industry, enables it to buy and sell its products at lower rates than competitors. Small businesses just can't compete.

WalMart hurts local economies in other ways. Many small-town merchants deposit their holdings in local banks. Their deposits, and interest from deposits, usually stay within the community through loans or other local investments. WalMart, on the other hand, deposits its holdings in out-of-state banks, keeping it from circulating in the local economy.

According to John Sweeney, president of the AFL-CIO, "WalMart is a corporate outlaw."

Jane Sims agrees. The pain and betrayal she felt after her husband's death cannot be equated or mathematically formulated. She can't have her husband back. But something can be done.

According to the UFCW, WalMart should be held accountable for its actions, which is why the union has called a National Day of Action against the retailer Wednesday, Jan. 14, 2004.

Now is the time to start planning local activities educating consumers and employees alike about Wal-Mart's anti-union policies.

ASHCROFT PUTS ON HOOVER'S DRAG

BY F. TIMOTHY MARTIN

In the wake of 9-11, more arrests, harassment and other repressive tactics against community activists are apparent. While civil libertarians are clamoring for rights lost with the passage of the USA PATRIOT Act, the Bush administration has arrogantly pushed for an expansion of its investigatory powers.

The climate of hysteria – think "freedom fries" and a ban on the Dixie Chicks – combined with repression, has created a situation that future historians will likely compare to the Palmer Raids following World War I, the Red Scare of the 1950s, and J. Edgar Hoover's COINTELPRO program of the 1960s.

Any doubts to this fact were eliminated after Justice Department plans were leaked to the Center for Public Integrity back in February. Among its more egregious stipulations, the Domestic Security Enhancement Act, dubbed Patriot Act 2, will allow the government to obtain credit and library records without a warrant, eliminate the requirement that government officials disclose the identity of any American citizen detained in a terrorist investigation, and further target groups and individuals engaged in civil disobedience through wiretapping, asset seizure and/or the stripping of citizenship rights.

With Attorney General John Ashcroft recently embarking on a whistle stop tour promoting these repressive tactics, along with a president shamelessly willing to invoke the second anniversary of a national tragedy to shore up support for Patriot 2, it's hardly surprising that a growing list of activists are feeling the heat. A few examples:

- Police arrested hundreds of demonstrators in New York City during massive anti-war protests last Feb. 15. The city made every effort to thwart the protest; first by denying their right to march, then by strategically blocking streets and making hundreds of arrests. Officials illegally coerced arrestees into providing private information that was subsequently entered into a police database, in clear violation of their constitutionally protected rights.
- In February, federal authorities arrested a Kuwaiti-born computer science professor, Sami Al-Arian, charging him with fundraising and organizing for a Palestinian militant group. While in jail awaiting his trial in 2005, Al-Arian contends prison officials are opening his mail outside his presence and not allowing him adequate time to discuss his case with lawyers.

- At a mall in upstate New York, police arrested Stephen Downs, a 61-year-old lawyer, for refusing to remove a T-shirt he bought while shopping there that read, "Give Peace a Chance" and "Peace on Earth."

- On March 20, 17 anti-war protesters at the University of New Mexico were tear-gassed and beaten with batons as they were taken into custody.

- In April, police in Oakland fired rubber bullets, tear gas and wooden pellets at long-shoremen and demonstrators who had gathered to protest in support of dockworkers. Witnesses claimed police used excessive force. Several people sustained injuries.

- Two publishers of *War Times* were among hundreds of individuals placed on a secret list by the Transportation Security Administration (TSA). Both right- and left-wing activists have criticized the TSA-administered effort, and in August were successful in getting Washington to acknowledge the existence of the secret list, which is entirely separate from the 1,000-person "no fly" list also maintained by the TSA.

Special thanks to the American Civil Liberties Union for providing research for this report.

U.N. RESOLUTION IS ITS EPITAPH

BY DONALD PANETH

UNITED NATIONS, N.Y.—The unanimous adoption October 16, 2003 of United Nations Security Council resolution 1511 (2003) on Iraq successfully concluded more than a year of diplomacy, war and occupation by the United States and United Kingdom.

The resolution provided everything that the U.S. and U.K. wanted – the authorization by the Security Council of a multinational force for Iraq under U.S. command; an appeal to U.N. member states and international financial institutions for contributions of money; and reaffirmation of the "responsibilities" of the Coalition Provisional Authority in Iraq.

In the future, operative paragraph 19 of the resolution may be interpreted to provide "cover" for the spread of the Bush administration's strategic plans to remake the Middle East.

It calls upon member states: "To prevent the transit of terrorists to Iraq, arms for terrorists, and financing that would support terrorists, and emphasizes the importance of strengthening the cooperation of the coun-

tries of the region, particularly neighbors of Iraq, in this regard." It is possible that under that paragraph the United States and Britain might carry out future "anti-terrorist" actions against Syria and Iran.

The resolution received the endorsement of U.N. Secretary-General Kofi Annan who said he would do his "utmost" to implement its provisions.

Approval of the resolution revealed how the U.S. carried out a well-orchestrated and coordinated policy at the United Nations during the past year. It was a duplicitous, deceptive policy, carefully screened from view and never fully apparent, never articulated in the press.

Opposition to that policy, it turns out, was more apparent than real. In the end, France, Germany, Russia and China went along with the United States.

The Council withheld its approval of a resolution that would have specifically authorized the U.S. to go to war against Iraq, but subsequently passed six resolutions backing the U.S. and the war – on March 28, April 24, May 22, July 3, Aug. 14, and finally, Oct. 16.

It was an ignoble policy full of significance

for world affairs. It signifies that the U.N. has been eliminated as an organization independent in any sense of the U.S. and the West.

It signifies that there will be no political or economic reform of the U.N. Such reforms have been called for repeatedly and reiterated this year in the General Assembly. The Security Council may be enlarged to include Germany and Japan as permanent members, but that will be it.

It signifies that peace activists and critics of U.S. policy will have a more difficult time gaining attention, stating their case, being taken seriously.

It signifies that President George W. Bush will be reinstalled in the White House next year.

It signifies that the emotional atmosphere in which everyone is living will become more feverish and frantic, more unpleasant and threatening.

It signifies that the moment of 1945 at the end of World War II, in which the U.N. charter proclaimed that the U.N. would endeavor to maintain international peace and security, is over. That era of hope is past. There is no peace.

COLOMBIA: INEQUALITY AND BLOOD

BY NICK DEARDEN

There are few countries on earth where trade union leaders can only access their offices by climbing out of a bulletproof jeep surrounded by bodyguards holding semi-automatic weapons and walking through a metal room equipped with electronic steel gates in order to start work in a bomb-proof office.

This is Colombia, one of Latin America's "oldest democracies."

One teacher or lecturer has been killed every single week in Colombia this year. From 27 assassinations of teachers, up from 27 in 1999 to 83 in 2003, have made organizing impossible in many areas. Extreme right-wing militias linked to the armed forces and authorities carry out 95 percent of these abuses. In the past five years 5,000 people have "disappeared" at the hands of paramilitaries.

Former trade union leader and now Congressman Wilson Borja, who limps as a result of an assassination attempt, sums up the situation: "Colombians are so poor because Colombia is so rich." Colombia possesses 16 of the world's 22 most desirable resources, notably oil and gold.

Yet just over one percent of the population owns 58 percent of the land, 13 million Colombians earn less than \$40 a month, 3.5 million children are outside the educational system and half of the citizenry lacks health care. Meanwhile, increasing amounts of money – Colombia is the third biggest recipient of U.S. military aid in the world – is poured into paying off the national debt and increasing the military strength of the security forces.

One teacher who works in a school on the outskirts of Bogotá has been persecuted for the past 15 years. She is accused of being a guerrilla – meaning that she is being set up for "cleansing" operations and her two teenage daughters have also been targeted. She described matter-of-factly how her husband was kidnapped and then killed by paramilitaries.

Teachers and lecturers are not the only targets – progressive lawyers, priests, students, any form of trade unionist, or just small farmers who happen to live in the wrong area have also been victimized. Colombia is a country in which protest is being outlawed, in which anyone who questions authority is labeled a terrorist.

President Alvaro Uribe is desperate to sign on to the Free Trade Area of the Americas, which will create the world's largest single market and solidify Latin America as a source of cheap raw materials, labor and markets. Colombia's food imports have already increased from one million tons in 1990 to eight million tons today – this in a country of incredibly rich soil where crops thrive.

The poor majority in Colombia are treated as if their poverty was a consciously chosen option designed to inconvenience the rich. Graffiti on a wall in Medellín declare: "The peace of the rich is a war against the poor." While I was talking with teachers in Medellín, a U.S.-supplied Blackhawk helicopter drowned out our conversation as it made its way towards the city's poor neighborhoods.

The Colombian military appears to be implementing a U.S.-style counterinsurgency strategy: drain the water – the civilians – and kill the fish – the guerrillas. The U.S.-backed government has overseen a huge wave of raids, security measures and violence throughout the country, but many more community and social leaders have been killed than guerrillas.

But if fear and terror stretch to the base of society here, then so do courage and hope. Despite the frontal assault, ordinary Colombians refuse to allow the bonds of society to be broken. Trade unions under attack become social movements fighting poverty. New communities grow up around displacement and disappearance. Victimized Colombians are surely among the bravest people in the world – summed up in the slogan, "Kill one of us and ten more will fight back."

For the full report go to colombiajournal.org.



AFGHANISTAN: THE OTHER OCCUPATION

BY CATRIONA STEWART

As the cold nights of winter begin to descend upon Afghanistan for the third time since the U.S. invasion, conditions for international soldiers, relief workers and the country's 26 million citizens are still a long way from favorable.

Increasingly bold assaults by Taliban and al-Qaeda insurgents have contributed to scores of attacks on military and civilian personnel. In an effort to undermine the U.S.-backed government and the reconstruction effort, Taliban fighters have attacked government offices in the South, targeted and killed foreign aid workers, and earlier this month beheaded two Afghans on a petrol truck used to ferry fuel to coalition forces.

The bloodshed also includes heavy factional fighting in the northern provinces, where last week alone some 80 militants were killed.

The U.S. military has been quick to downplay the significance of the heightened activity. "Whenever they [the Taliban] manifest themselves in Afghanistan, we kill them," said spokesman Rodney Davis at a recent news conference in Kabul.

To make matters worse, an unprecedented drought has destroyed crops, leaving much of the country without enough food or potable water. Having to deal also with environmental damage caused by U.S.-led military action two years ago, many Afghan farmers have been forced to abandon food production and return to growing a more lucrative crop – poppies.

One of the byproducts of Taliban rule was the near eradication of domestic poppy production. Since the regime's overthrow Afghanistan has regained its former notoriety as the world's largest grower of poppy – currently accounting for almost three-quarters of global opium production.

Attendant drug use among Afghans has skyrocketed, especially among women, many of whom are former refugees who returned to Afghanistan to find few prospects and little means of support.

While the plight of Afghan women was often used to legitimate military intervention in Afghanistan, there has been little discernible improvement in their lives.

According to a recent report by Amnesty International, the international community and the interim administration have proven unable to fulfill their promises of protection to women and

girls, leaving them at high risk for domestic violence, forced marriage and rape by armed groups.

William B. Taylor, Jr., the U.S. State Department's Afghanistan Coordinator, offers a guardedly pessimistic view, saying, "Failure is not an option in Afghanistan, but it is still possible."

In the isolated and unstable southeastern province of Paktika, Afghans know how closely failure looms.

"The people in the jirgas [councils] have warned that if they continue to suffer in the face of what is becoming a human tragedy, their anger will reach the gates of Kabul," said Paktika's governor, Mohammad Ali Jalali.

Arguably Afghanistan's most neglected province, Paktika may soon be forced to close its only hospital due to lack of funds, leaving the region's more than 2 million residents with no option but to travel great distances over unpaved roads to obtain health care.

Despite reassurances from Kabul, the recent approval of an additional 11.53 million Euros in humanitarian aid from the European Commission and further funding from the United States in the works, Ali Jalali still sees a severe lack of drinking water and a shortage of doctors and teachers as major obstacles for his people.

"I don't agree with the government and international community when they claim they have given top priority to education," says Nadya, Paktika's only female schoolteacher. "There are very simple ways that are neither too expensive nor too complicated to improve education in rural areas."

Unfortunately, Paktika province is not unique. Outside of Kabul, domination by regional warlords with U.S.-backed militias has fueled widespread insecurity, curtailing the activities of international development agencies and reconstruction efforts.

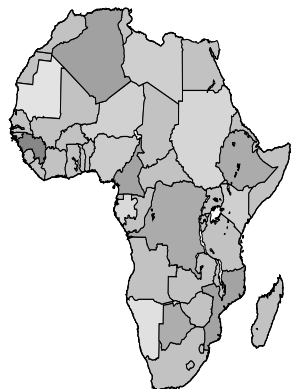
Humanitarian groups have been calling for the expansion of the International Security Assistance Force, known as ISAF, which has been limited to securing Kabul since the establishment of the interim government. ISAF is sponsored by the North Atlantic Treaty Organization.

The United Nations Security Council recently gave the green light for NATO to expand its mission throughout Afghanistan.

"Potentially, that's very significant," says Vikram Parekh, a senior analyst for the International Crisis Group in Kabul. "It depends on how the expansion and deployment is carried out."

AFRICA: U.S. BUILDS FORWARD BASES

BY KAZEMBE BULAGOON



In the name of fighting global terrorism the United States is expanding its military presence in Africa. General James Jones, commander of U.S. European forces, said the U.S. was negotiating to install several military bases across the continent. These would include long-term access to bases in Mali and Algeria and possible refueling agreements in Senegal and Uganda. There are also plans to negotiate the construction of strip down airfields and bases that will give troops instant access to different parts of Africa.

Currently, there are 1,500 marine and Special Forces troops in Djibouti, a country on the horn of Africa. The Djibouti base is

within striking distance of Sudan, Somalia and Yemen, which have been referred to as "terrorist hotspots."

In 2002, the United States established a naval base in the oil-rich country of Sao Tome in the Gulf of Guinea. And, despite a withdrawal from the headlines, 1,800 U.S. Marines are still sailing off the coast of Liberia.

As conflicts rage in the Middle East, Africa's mineral resources are becoming of "strategic importance" to U.S. interest. David Gordon, a senior CIA official, predicts that the United States will import more oil from Africa than from Russia or the Caucasus. Currently the United States imports 1.5 million barrels a day from West Africa.

VENEZUELA: THE COUP THAT NEVER ENDS

BY ALEX HOGAN

Venezuela's been in for a hard ride since Hugo Chavez was first elected president in 1999. Since then, the country has been in a "civil cold war," rocked by anonymous bombings, a mutiny of the national elite and one short-lived coup.

In April of 2002, Chavez survived a right-wing military coup lead by the head of Venezuela's Chamber of Commerce. It collapsed after only three days in the face of a massive movement by Venezuelan citizens and soldiers in support of the populist leader.

The coup was brewed by a wealthy, light-skinned elite discontented with Chavez's attempts to redistribute the nation's substantial oil wealth. They had been trying to foment a national crisis to remove Chavez. This culminated in a general strike in the oil industry, officially launched by the Confederation of Venezuelan Workers (CTV), but

fully supported by industry bosses who shut down their own oil wells. The CTV had received \$150,000 from an AFL-CIO fund.

Key plotters had given the White House a heads-up about the April coup as early as February, according to Newsweek, and dissident officers had visited U.S. officials even earlier.

Chavez is not a popular figure in Washington. His friendship with Fidel Castro, criticism of the "war on terror" and persistent stand against free market policies don't mix well with Venezuela's status as the third biggest oil supplier to the United States.

A second attempt at shutting down the oil industry took place at the beginning of 2003. While damaging the economy, the strikers failed to oust Chavez, who fired over 18,000 managers in the national oil company, cleaned house and installed loyalists in key positions.

Chavez has retained a firm hold on power since the coup, largely through intense loyalty among the poor and lower working class, known as

"Chavistas." Throughout the slums of Caracas, newly formed Bolivarian Circles have organized a populist militia centered on the paternal figure of the president.

However the elite opposition has not gone away. Neither have rumors of U.S. involvement. Last February, explosions ripped through the Spanish and Colombian diplomatic missions, injuring four. Leaflets left at the scene claimed the bombing to be work of zealous Chavez supporters, but many believe that it was the work of Chavez opponents instead, hoping to create an international incident.

Bush and the Organization of American States have reiterated their support for recall elections, which Chavez rejects. His opponents are trying to gather the needed 2.4 million signatures by December to hold a vote. Unfortunately for them, Arnold Schwarzenegger is not Venezuelan and the anti-Chavez movement has fragmented in the face of the President's continuing support among the lower classes.

PALESTINE UNDER SEIGE

BY KRISTEN ESS

WEST BANK, Palestine—"We always react to Israel. It's like we're always trying to appease them just in case it will make them stop the occupation," says the Palestinian head of an NGO in Ramallah.

"When someone is constantly pushing on your head, you can't look around. You can't look up. The Israelis don't want us to think of anything, or to develop a strategy."

He explains that Palestinians are trying "to work on a strategy, to proactively build one with more people involved. We completely lack a strategy in everything. We just depend on our cause being just. We assume that's enough."

The U.N. General Assembly rallied to the Palestinian cause on Oct. 21 by passing a resolution in a 144-4 vote that called upon Israel to "stop and reverse the construction of the wall in the Occupied Palestinian Territory," referring to it as "in contradiction to relevant provisions of international law."

Israel was dismissive of the latest resolution. Israeli political sources told the *Daily Yediot Aharanot*, "there is no weight to the U.N. General Assembly resolution and it is possible for the General Assembly to take a resolution by consensus that they can drop the moon."

Earlier in October, the U.N. Security Council voted to condemn Israel's attacks on Rafah, the closure wall and construction of 600 new settlement units. The United States vetoed the resolution. Of the 167 U.N. resolutions against the state of Israel, none have been implemented. By and large the international community has long since fallen into the "Israel as victim" quagmire.

The Palestinians know this, and know that being just is not enough to stop the Israeli military. In late October, Israeli forces bombed and rocketed residential neighborhoods in Gaza City killing more than a dozen and wounding scores more. Israeli bulldozers have been plowing through long-since devastated Rafah. Roughly 2,000 people there were made homeless in just three days.

Israel's military has not ceased building illegal settlements or constructing the "closure wall" inside the West Bank. Midnight raids continue. Palestinians "wanted" (or not) are taken daily to Israeli prisons without charge or trial. Forced exile continues—60 people have been "transferred" from the West Bank to Gaza alone since March 2002.

It's all part of the Israeli government's strategy of ethnic cleansing. How can Palestinians develop a political strategy under these conditions? The Palestinians have gone along with Oslo and Camp Davids, with one-sided "cease-fires," and the Road Map, only to find more of nothing. A 23-year-old refugee in the West Bank said, "We are always just thinking to negotiate with Israel. If the Israelis dismiss us from the negotiating table, we leave without anything and come back the next day to lose more."

A young woman in Bethlehem wonders, "What can we do when we go along with the Road Map and even this bad document gets pillaged by the Israelis? Anyway," she adds, "the Road Map had nothing to do with us. It was an agreement between the U.S. and the Israelis."

And then comes the Switzerland Agreement, about which Jamal Ashatti, head of the Refugees Committee in the Palestinian Legislative Council says, "At the same time we are facing the hardest war with the Israelis from Jenin to Rafah and at the same time our situation is going from bad to worse, someone comes to us with a new agreement, one which gets rid of the Right of Return."

An official Israeli statement explaining its October 20 attacks on Gaza City mirrored the Bush administration's posture of aggressive victim. "We will do whatever it takes to root out the terrorists."

Only two percent of Palestinians have engaged in armed resistance against the Occupation during this Intifada, regardless of the fact that under international law an occupied people have the right to defend themselves.

A Palestinian journalist in Jenin speaks earnestly, his eyes searching, "There is no Palestinian strategy. There isn't even a strategy to lead the resistance."

He goes on to talk about the new Prime Minister Ahmed Quria. "There is no strategy politically. Abu Ala is having his meeting to discuss, to discuss what? Just to say what we know, that the Israelis have closed off all of Jerusalem. It's all closed from Bethlehem to Ramallah. There are just settlements in between blocking everything, with the wall blocking more in the north. And what are we doing?"

He looks befuddled and bewildered. "For us, for the normal people, for the Palestinian people, we are walking nowhere."

After finding a new prime minister, someone the Israelis were willing to speak to, and losing him because of his unwillingness to be bullied through the Road Map as Arafat was through Oslo, the Palestinian Authority has appointed Ahmed Quria. But the Israelis will not speak to him either. The PA is planning to hold elections in June.

The Jenin journalist laughs out loud, "Ahmed Quria still thinks we'll have elections? How could we even make it to the polls?"

The West Bank and Gaza Strip are closed, many towns remain under curfew, the sound of F-16s fills the room.

BOLIVIA: PROTESTERS BRING DOWN PRESIDENT

BY VANESSA HRADSKY

On Saturday, October 18, after a month of social unrest, Bolivian President Gonzalo Sanchez de Lozada finally gave in to protesters' boisterous demands for his resignation. Under Bolivia's Constitution, his Vice President, Carlos Mesa, was appointed as the new President.

In the largest demonstrations ever seen in the tiny landlocked country, tens of thousands of protesters—most of them indigenous Aymara Indians—blocked major roads and took over the capital, La Paz, infuriated about Sanchez de Lozada's decision to build a pipeline through Chile to the Pacific Ocean to export billions of dollars worth of natural gas to the United States and Mexico.

Southern Bolivia's recently discovered natural gas reserves are equivalent to about 5 billion barrels of petroleum, which several foreign corporations and governments are eager to exploit. Both Chile and Peru offered to have a pipeline built through their territory for Bolivia, which has been landlocked since Chile annexed Bolivia's access to the Pacific after the war of 1879-1884. Running the pipeline through Peru was estimated to cost Bolivia some \$500 million more than building it through Chile, which most Bolivians were strongly opposed to because of animosity between the two nations that has lingered since the 1879 war. Many Bolivians blame Chile for impoverishing their nation by denying them access to the Pacific.

Lead by Evo Morales, head of the main opposition party Movement to Socialism (MAS), protesters decried their natural gas being handed over to a foreign consortium, stating that it should instead be used domestically to help boost the Bolivian economy and fuel some 250,000 homes before being exported.

Still, Sanchez de Lozada's government, pressured by Pacific LNG—which won the contract to develop the gas—stated that the pipeline would go through Chile. Pacific



PEOPLE POWER: MINERS CELEBRATE THE RESIGNATION OF BOLIVIAN PRESIDENT GONZALO SANCHEZ DE LOZADA.

LNG is a consortium made up of British Gas, British Petroleum and Spain's Repsol-YPF.

Farmers, students, labor unions, community groups and other government opponents escalated their protests, calling for Sanchez de Lozada's resignation. Human rights groups reported that up to 70 people died since the protests began in mid-September.

Bolivia's poor indigenous majority was already upset by the government's free-market reforms and U.S.-backed plans to eradicate coca, which locals chew to stave off hunger. Coca farmers used to be financially compensated for replacing coca plants with legal crops, but under intense pressure from the U.S.-led "war on drugs," Sanchez de Lozada's predecessor decided to eliminate payments to the farmers. Curbing coca production is required for Bolivia to receive financial aid from donors like the International Monetary Fund and World Bank.

A US-educated and US-backed millionaire, Sanchez de Lozada served as president from 1993 to 1997 and was elected for a second term in August 2002, despite winning only 22.5 percent of the popular vote. Part of his unpopularity arose from his use of an American-accented version of Spanish, a reason many Bolivians derisively refer to

him as "El Gringo."

The recent incidents were not the first time Bolivia has seen social unrest during Sanchez de Lozada's administration. In February, 31 people were killed and 100 more injured after civilian protesters and striking police officers clashed with government troops over the now-deposed president's plan to introduce a new income tax. Sanchez de Lozada barely escaped out of his presidential palace in an ambulance.

The millionaire who succeeds him, Carlos Mesa, is a former journalist and historian who already declared that he would create a special ministry for Indian affairs to address the protesters' concerns. He is also calling for early elections and a special referendum to decide the fate of the controversial natural gas exportation project.

As Bolivia's indigenous protesters return to their Andean villages and life in the country's cities slowly returns to normal, distrust of the government runs high. "Within three months, we will return to our ideology of fury," a resident of the industrial shantytown of El Alto told the *New York Times*. Felipe Quispe, one of the main leaders of the movement that toppled Sanchez de Lozada has also stated that Carlos Mesa has 90 days to reverse the free-market course charted by his predecessor or be overthrown.

MORE RADICAL LESS EXTREME

BY JED BRANDT

Violence is not the issue. I don't think it ever was. Not back in the day when the Weather Underground blew up toilets in the Capitol Building and not today as the Earth Liberation Front (ELF) flips out over SUVs and condominiums. Revolution isn't a leather-jacket tactic radicals adopt – it is a transformation of the whole society made by millions. It can be violent, but it's not about violence. And it's definitely not, as the old saying goes, a dinner party.

Over the last few years, dozens of attacks claimed by the ELF have burned a lot of cars, a few construction sites on the West Coast, and earned a 23-year prison sentence for Jeffrey "Free" Leurs, a young anarchist who never hurt a fly. The ELF is more logo than organization, a mantle individuals can claim without the security risk – or accountability – of a collective process. Yet, despite their claims to "direct action," it's a lot more "propaganda of the deed" than a storming of the Bastille. It makes a big splash, but changes nothing. The system is unaffected.

>> Direct action is about taking resistance beyond slogans and symbolism.

Somewhere along the way, this got lost to the Black Bloc fetishists and grant-written glitterati.

The Weathermen despised the common people of this country with a spirit more aristocratic than proletarian. In opposition to the Black Panther-inspired slogan "Serve the People," Weather argued that radicals needed to "Fight the People," meaning white people, for their supposed complicity in the system. Weather was, of course, all white.

The ELF, less theoretical in their approach, paints slogans like "Fat Lazy Americans" on the side of SUVs before they torch them. What they both miss is that it is people themselves and not self-appointed bands of the disaffected who actually make revolution. People aren't just fat, lazy and stupid. And quite a few have a good idea what's wrong, not that you'd ever know it from the narrow worldview of these self-appointed saviors.

Hating people for the miserable conditions we find ourselves in is corrosive – and a sure sign that "radicals" are isolated and out of touch. Extremism is taking reformist politics to the level of violence. Radicalism is getting to the source of the problem and organizing broadly to build people's power. It's a lot easier to talk to your neighbor than it is to light his car on fire.

Weatherman developed out of a maelstrom not unlike today's global justice movement. Predominantly white, middle class and young, today's protest radicals often rebel against their own culture instead of fighting for it. In the 1960s they used "participatory democracy." Today, the talk at least is of "consensus." Weather was an all-white group packed with upper-class dropouts that guilt-tripped about "white privilege." The ELF just ignores it. Weatherman thought they were revolutionaries, while the ELF seems to have no vision of the future whatsoever. Both are responses to a rapid growth in disorganized radicalism without much connection to people in everyday life, or even radical groups with more than a couple of years experience. The frustration and alienation remain the same, but the times are different. Very different.

Responding to this desperation with some Todd Gitlin mantra about becoming a young loyal opposition isn't an option. When the cold truth is confronted – that we don't live in some wondrous democratic experiment and that the state will guarantee the power of unaccountable elites through the most vicious wars and repression – activists face a choice: Are we to remain content as a permanent opposition, waving placards, or burning SUVs, while holing up in college towns or any one of a dozen Lower East Sides?

Or will those who believe another world is possible work to make it happen? Direct action is about taking resistance beyond slogans and symbolism. Somewhere along the way, this got lost to the Black Bloc fetishists and the grant-written glitterati.

All across America, millions have had their illusions ripped away in the last two years. The ugly empire is on full display. The Democratic Party, and the leftist intelligentsia, have proven themselves complicit in not just the bloodlettings abroad, but the ongoing internment of Muslims and repression at home. Something needs to be done. But turning to vandalism and symbolic violence isn't all that different from the "activism" of the legal left. In a strange way, it isn't even that different from voting. It is all a politics of representation – and not actuality. We need to be more radical, less extreme.

For the first time in a generation, the radical left has an opening, what some have called a "teachable moment." But too many activists confuse extremism and alienation with a healthy, robust insurgency that speaks in plain English to everyday people at work, on the train and in the neighborhood. If radicals are angry enough to fight, the question then stands: Do they have enough love to win? Another world isn't just possible, it's inevitable. How it goes is up to us.



MAKE PIGS PAY: Weatherman graffiti from New York in the early 1970s.

A REVOLUTION IN THEIR OWN MIND

BY STEVEN WISHNIA

The Weather Underground was incredibly destructive to the radical movement of the sixties. Its dismissal of the white working class as hopelessly racist pigs alienated a crucial potential constituency, and its denunciation of activists who wouldn't follow their kamikaze line contributed to the radical movement's disintegration.

Granted, some white working-class people engaged in foul behavior during that era, from the beatings of anti-war protesters by World Trade Center construction workers in 1970 to the racist resistance to school busing in Boston in 1975-76. On the other hand, if you want to start a revolution – or any progressive movement – in America, you have to look among the people who don't have a lot of money and have to deal with boredom and petty tyranny on the job.

It's suicidal to reject the largest demographic among this group, just because they won't jump to become armed revolutionaries when some privileged kid (most of the Weatherpeople came from upper-middle-class-and-up backgrounds) tells them they should. Dismissing as racist white people's concerns about their kids getting ripped off for their lunch money drives them into the arms of the right wing, and won't win any credibility either among black or Latino people who live in or have escaped high-crime areas.

In an era when much of the left had an apologetic or romantic attitude toward street criminals, the Weatherpeople topped it all by celebrating the Manson Family murders. "Dig it, they even shoved a fork into a victim's stomach," Weather leader Bernardine Dohrn exclaimed in a December 1969 speech. (This was before Charles Manson was revealed to be a pimply white supremacist in hippie drag.) This helped open the way for the racist, "tough on crime," phony populism that has permeated American politics for the last 35 years, from Richard Nixon to Rudy Giuliani.

Before its 1969 split, Students for a Democratic Society had perhaps 100,000 members, and close to a million people, if not more, turned out for antiwar demonstrations at least a couple of times a year. The Weather Underground took the 300 or so hardest core of

these people and essentially told everybody else, "If you're not ready to die with us, you're a wimp wallowing in white-skin privilege."

Most people weren't, and the upsurge broke.

The tragedy of this is that by the time my generation came of age, Watergate and the 1973-74 gas crisis and recession were proving to most people in America that the movement had been right: Richard Nixon was a petty-fascist liar and the rich were scamming while everyone else suffered. But with little left of the left beyond a handful of minuscule, often cult-like sects, the main alternatives for disaffected youth were grudging assimilation, rural-hippie isolation, or a nihilistic devotion to sex, drugs, and rock'n'roll. (The second grew organic vegetables and the third produced punk-rock, so they weren't all bad.)

I don't have any answers. The tragic paradox of political violence is that the ruling class is not likely to yield power without it, but the types of personalities and organizations that are best at it are the ones most likely to lead to dictatorship (Soviet Union, China, Cambodia), while the US has brutally deposed leftist governments that tried to stay democratic (Chile, Nicaragua). I can understand the frustrations that led people to turn urban guerrilla. The Weather Underground was formed after four years of protesting had failed to stop the Vietnam War, and if you don't want to explode after watching The Weather Underground documentary's blood-spurting footage of a South Vietnamese general shooting a handcuffed prisoner in the head, you've got a hole in your soul. But successful politics is about effective tactics and strategy, not merely acting out your rage.

Marge Piercy, in "The Grand Coolie Damn," her pioneering critique of sexism on the left, wrote that, beyond a certain point, the process of hardening yourself for the struggle "does not produce a more efficient revolutionary, only a more efficient son of a bitch." And Chicago Black Panther leader Fred Hampton, two months before he was murdered by police in December 1969, called the Weather "Days of Rage" protests "opportunistic, adventurous, and Custeristic."

Both criticisms still stand.

DEFEATING EMPIRE:

WHY THE STRUGGLE AGAINST WASHINGTON'S WAR IS ALSO A STRUGGLE AGAINST THE STATE

BY ERIC LAURSEN

America's war of aggression in Iraq is pulling together opponents around the world, each for their own particular reasons. Many if not most are choosing to take the same road to ending the war – a road that leads through Cancun and Miami, the respective sites of the most recent, failed World Trade Organization conference and the upcoming attempt to impose a Free Trade Area of the Americas on the developing nations of the Western Hemisphere. By taking time away to join the indigenous peoples and workers protesting these conspiracies of the wealthy, antiwar activists help to link the imperialism represented by the "Washington Consensus" on global trade with the imperialism embodied by Washington's push to dominate the Middle East.

That's the good news, and it promises to help tie U.S. antiwar activists into a more tightly woven global coalition against the American foreign policy agenda than existed even during the Vietnam War. The bad news? There isn't any yet – but there will be if the antiwar movement fails to extend its critique of the war to the nature of the state itself.

So let's stop beating up on George Bush for a second – he was hardly noticing it anyway! – and instead ask the question why a supposedly democratic, representative government decided to do such a harebrained thing as invade Iraq.

Whatever kind of government it has, the function of the state is to take direction – from a leader, from an elite, from a powerful coterie of propertied interests. The state is the blank slate on which these players inscribe their plans for acquiring power and wealth. In laying out a grand plan for U.S. domination of the Middle East, Bush and his cohorts have supplied Washington with what it needs most – a mission and a long-term project to strengthen itself and extend its influence.

Make no mistake about it, should the imperial project that began with the invasion of Afghanistan and Iraq have any long-term success, the U.S. is liable to emerge as a vastly more powerful state than any we've seen before. Its military reach will be wider and deeper than any other state in history. Its capability to pry into every detail – not just of its citizens' lives but those of anyone in the world it targets – will be unprecedented. Its ability to project the interests of large corporations and natural resources despoilers into every inch of the globe will be nearly absolute. The destructive force it can unleash will be many times greater than that held by any other power.

Congress is now on the brink of giving the Bush regime everything it needs – for now – to push forward with this blueprint, and no wonder: It's the only long-term vision for the American state that's actually on the table and in the process of being implemented. None of the Democratic presidential candidates has yet articulated a different scenario because, I suspect, they don't have one: and perhaps, deep down, they find the Bush vision too attractive – if only one of them, rather than Bush, was in charge.

We've been here before. For most of the Vietnam War period, Democratic critics of the "conflict" acted with one hand tied behind their backs, because they could not articulate a vision in which the U.S. would actually withdraw itself from one of its quasi-colonial possessions. Every day that the U.S. stays in Iraq and Afghanistan, this will become more and more the case as well. The losses may be unacceptable, the costs may be unbearable, but the mere thought of pulling out will be unthinkable because it would mean curtailing the expansion and enrichment of the American state.

Politicians, and political scientists, like to see the state not as a servant of the people but as a creative, dynamic, and expanding force – and if it must be fertilized with blood so be it. Today, the U.S. and China are the states with the most potential to fit this model, which is why Washington wants so badly to contain and constrain Beijing. But Washington and its apologists have seen the U.S. as a different kind of state for a long time. During the Vietnam War, the Johnson and Nixon Administrations surrounded themselves with troops of academics and "policy professionals" whose job was to provide a rationale for the war and the national security state whose creation the war was facilitating. Today their descendants are



Fareed Zakharia, Michael Ignatieff, Robert Kaplan, and the other cheerleaders of "empire" who do the necessary intellectual acrobatics to build an ideology around Washington's effort to push the state to its next creative level.

"The most important moral commitment for America is to preserve its power," Kaplan told the *Washington Post* emphatically last year, using the kind of "faith-based" language we're in danger of becoming used to. This view, and the evolution in the concept of the state that it embodies, is what we are really fighting against.

9/11 gave the U.S. – gave the state it represents – its first real chance in 30 years to go back to the imperial project it began in Vietnam and to get it right. But the subsequent invasions also give us a chance to get a few things right that the antiwar movement of the 60's perhaps did not – in particular to recognize the state itself as the focus of our struggle. Our goal should be not just to get the U.S. out of Iraq and Afghanistan – to defeat the American bid for empire in the Middle East – but to make sure the wheel never turns around to this same place again.

Eric Laursen is an organizer for No Blood For Oil.

STATI

The Independent asked antiwar activists at

THE SUN OF TODAY

BY BAL PINGUEL

The day after the largest, globally coordinated lies in history, a New York Times editorial described the contest between "two superpowers" in the midst of a contest between "two superpowers." However, after millions marched against this war on February 15, it can no longer be denied that the second world public opinion. Anti-war sentiment is much of the world overwhelming.

There is something uncanny about the evolution of the relationship between these contesting forces. The current has vowed to anticipate "terrorist attacks" through preemptive strikes against would-be terrorists and governments "harboring" them, causing wars in order to presumably stop them.

The assumptions behind "pre-emptive strikes" are so shaky that they had to be buttressed by a new kind of "weapons of mass destruction."

The way that the rival "super-power" – world opinion – mobilized itself for the February 15 demonstration was also a convergence of reality and fiction. Its very revolutionary.

The first of its kind, the world call to simultaneously developed from the space created at the No European Social Forum in Florence, itself in World Social Forums hosted in Paerto Alegre, in part organized through old-fashioned grassroots building and education – February 15 represented a breakthrough in activism through the internet to put one date in the mind of a hundred



E OF THE MOVEMENT

nd writers to share their thoughts on the nature of the problem and where opposition to the Bush Wars is going.

PERPOWERS DAY

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despite tremendous differences in philosophy and tempera-
ment among activists.

Three key questions now face the international peace and
justice movement:

1. How can the people prevent brazen aggression by the
world's strongest superpower when it is couched in con-
cepts like "pre-emptive strike" and famed in the rheto-
ric of fear?
2. How can the "will of the people" democratically be
respected?
3. In this age of "terror" (be it through state-sponsored
wars or small-group attacks), what is true security and
who is it for?

Given that the U.S. is the world's first comprehensive super-
power, dominating economically, politically, militarily and cul-
turally, the answer to these questions lies much with the peo-
ple of the United States in whose name this power is deployed.

These "pre-emptive" wars and overall interference in the
internal affairs of other countries will simply continue unless
checked from within.

The next step for the peace and justice movement in the US
is to build a solid foundation, or in organizers' parlance, base
building.

Base building does not have to start from scratch. There have
been successes in the anti-war and civil-rights movement upon
which the movement for peace and justice can grow. Given the
domestic impact of the war against terrorism, both in terms of
economic costs and the unquantifiable damage it exacts on civil
liberties, the ground for movement is fertile.

The peace and justice movement in the United States is
at a defining moment. We have, for the first time in
the past 30 years, really begun to build a movement
in a real way. This movement building has also caused us to
exercise our internalized and ignored demons; our own prej-
udices and presumptions.

For the past two years the world has been in a place of con-
tinual change. After September 11, 2001 the U.S. govern-
ment and military began a new war; the war on terrorism.
This war, with innumerable theaters and uncountable casu-
alties was promised to be a war that wouldn't end in our life-
times. So far the U.S. has made good on that promise.

The war on terrorism has had major battles fought, fas-
cist legislation has been passed in the U.S., in parts of the
Caribbean and Latin America, as well as in U.S. allied
countries across the world.

This is an unprecedented war in a nuclear age where the
stakes may climb so high as to challenge whether humani-
ty, as a species, can long endure. The war on terrorism has
issued in a new area of international politics and diploma-
cy. Arms treaties that have existed since World War Two
are now easily discard able. In the decade following the end
of the Cold War the war on terror affords weapons manu-
facturers new markets to sell their wares. Traditional allies have become polite enemies in this area of "for us
or against us" politics with the "us" not being very clear. The detainment, expulsion and deportation of many
people have pushed our country back to a new period of xenophobia.

But despite the fear of violence and recrimination, of deportation and incarceration, of death and nuclear
peril people the world over are resisting. This resistance gives me hope and proves that the "war without end"
will come to an end. The people of the world demand it. This is evident in the global protests of February
2003. These protests gave a face, voice and size to the largest anti-war movement in history.

It is evident in the coalition of the coerced and the ability of small, isolated countries to stand up together
against the U.S. It is evident in the breakdown of negotiations for global trade agreements that seek to invest
more power and money in the hands of the few at the expense of the many; it is evident in the movement that
is growing globally every day.

Movement building is the item of the era. No longer are organizers seeing their work as isolated to stop-
ping War X or stopping Dam Z from being built in some country. Organizers, activists and advocates are
banding together and recognizing our community. We are recognizing that the system that kills farm crops
and farmers in Columbia is also drilling for oil in the Arctic and clear cutting rainforest land in the Amazon.
We are realizing that the systems that oppress us are working together to accomplish their goals and that we
as resisters must find our commonalities and work together as well.

We are movement building and growing and winning. Recently the president of Bolivia resigned due to
pressure from his own people. Countries have forced the corporate welfare queens of international businesses
to rethink who they exploit. They have refused essentially to buy what they are selling. U.S. troops more and
more are becoming conscientious objectors. Turning their back on the military but not on their visions of their
country as a peacemaker instead of an occupier. The movement grows. The struggle continues.

BASE BUILDING

BY ROXANNE LAWSON



ANTI-RACIST ORGANIZING KEY TO LIBERATION

BY CHRIS CRASS

How do we build broad-based, anti-
racist, multiracial, feminist, class-
conscious movements capable of chal-
lenging global capitalism and US imperi-
alism? What can we learn from the largest anti-
war mobilization in the history of the world
that took place this past year? What does it
mean for community based racial justice strug-
gles when the AFL-CIO announces immigrant
rights as its #1 priority and actively supports
the historic Immigrant Worker Freedom
Rides?

What are we learning about international soli-
darity as the struggle for a free Palestine
becomes more central and the global South
continues to lead the way in the global justice
movement? What does it mean to look to radical
leadership in oppressed communities and
what roles do people coming from race, class
and/or gender-privileged communities play?
How do mass mobilizations, like the one today,

fit into a larger strategy? These are the kinds of
questions that I hear people asking and when
the left asks deep questions rather than knowing
all the right answers, I think it's a positive sign.
We need to be clear about what we think and
believe (which certainly includes answers), but
revolution is not an event to prepare for.
Revolution is a process of transformation that
we make and as Paulo Freire helped teach us, we
must make the road by walking. Asking ques-
tions, with the goal of increasing our capacity to
act, can move us forward.

I work with Anti-Racism for Global Justice,
a project of the Challenging White Supremacy
workshops. We do political education and
organizing with mostly white activists in the
global justice and anti-war movements. In the
late 60s the Student Non-Violent Coordinating
Committee challenged white activists to orga-
nize other white people as a way to build the base
of anti-racist radical politics in white commu-
nities. The goal was then, as it is now, to help

build multiracial movements led by oppressed
people. It is this political commitment that
drives our efforts challenging our own white
privilege and internalized racial superiority is
key to successful liberation struggle. We see
how white privilege has undermined social
change movements throughout US history and
that solidarity with people of color is key to
winning justice. Furthermore, successful move-
ments require men challenging patriarchy,
straight-identified people fighting heterosex-
ism and those with class privilege looking to
low-income and working-class leadership to
oppose capitalism.

As a white, middle-class male, I think it's key
to organize the communities that I come from -
privileged communities that see themselves
connected to and benefiting from the system.
While there are real benefits, the costs of this
system and the life affirming goals of the move-
ment must be articulated and organized around
concretely in privileged communities.

REVIEWS

& CRITICISM

NAMING THE SYSTEM

IMPERIALISM WITHOUT COLONIES

by Harry Magdoff
Monthly Review Press, 2003
152 pp.

In 1969, the United States was bogged down in a land war in Asia. Americans who believed that U.S. forces would be regarded as liberators discovered that they were instead viewed as foreign aggressors and occupiers. Demoralization among the troops was rampant and many returning veterans joined the growing anti-war movement.

Within that movement there was an intense debate on the nature of U.S. foreign policy. Liberals argued that the war in Vietnam was a "mistake," a calamitous error promoted by a circle of foreign policy analysts who were so blinded by their own anti-Communist ideology that they were unable to see the real nature of the war.

In opposition to the liberals, more radical forces argued that the war was in fact the perfectly logical outcome of the system they were increasingly calling U.S. imperialism.

The debate was an important one because it had implications for the future direction of the anti-war movement. If the war was simply a mistake produced by an otherwise well-functioning system, the solution was to replace the people in the White House with a more rational group who would end the war. But if the war was a practically inevitable result of U.S. imperialism, then it would be necessary to build a movement that had as its explicit objective the uprooting of that system.

A very important contribution to that debate was a thin book called *The Age of Imperialism, The Economics of U.S. Foreign Policy* by Harry Magdoff, an editor of *Monthly Review* magazine. *The Age of Imperialism* was actually a collection of lectures and articles by Magdoff, but taken together they constituted a well-documented and tightly argued case that the United States was an imperialist power and that its foreign policy was driven by the need to secure control, directly or indirectly, over potential markets and sources of raw materials in order to ensure the global economic dominance of the United States.

The effect of *The Age of Imperialism* was electric. Its non-rhetorical style and sober arguments convinced countless student activists to view themselves as anti-imperialists and to see their activism through the lens of a worldwide revolutionary fight against U.S. imperialism.

Now it's 2003 and the United States is once again getting bogged down in a land war in Asia. With the presidential elections closing in, an argument is once again



ANDREW STERN/INDYMEDIA

WE ARE EVERYWHERE

EDITED BY THE NOTES FROM NOWHERE COLLECTIVE >> VERSO >> 2003

Yesterday Seattle and today Bolivia. The World Trade Organization is paralyzed. The global south is precariously tilting away from the free trade orthodoxies of the Clinton era. And a rolling carnival of ecstatic street protests has brought song and resistance to the very seats of power.

Commentators have long noticed that the Global Justice movement against capitalism is "one 'no' and many 'yeses.'" For those looking to understand how the most powerful people in the world have found themselves suddenly humbled, unable to advance their free trade agenda except through open war, *We Are Everywhere* is a great introduction to the direct action ethos.

From the guerrilla gardening movement that swept New York City's burned-out slums in the 1980s to Indian farmers taking direct action against Monsanto's genetically-modified cotton crops, the Notes From Nowhere collective has managed to convey the harmony in what might otherwise seem like a hundred separate moments. Stressing a localism informed by global solidarity, vital resist-

ance has awoken vast numbers of people from illusions of the end of history. Many have begun to dream out loud.

Aside from the ambition of an anthology trying to cover a chaotic world movement, the book itself is a pretty thing to hold. So pretty, it is perhaps the first coffee-table book for radicals. Packed with photos and street art, light on jargon and bursting with energy, *We Are Everywhere* can't help but show why we might be getting somewhere.

If the book fails anywhere, it is in not exploring why the protest movements so catalytic from Seattle to Genoa have been unable to seriously answer the hard turn of the Bush and Berlusconi crowd. In this, *We Are Everywhere* bookends one of the many prehistories to the coming struggles. Multiplicity, immediacy and creativity are great values, but they aren't a strategy. Dancing on a wall won't bring it down. Or, as one contributor put the question by way of the summit battles – what would the smart crowds do if they actually broke in?

– JETHRO BURTON

unfolding in the anti-war movement over the nature of the war and what it will take not just to stop it but to prevent more wars like it. So it is very fortunate that a new collection of essays by Harry Magdoff, *Imperialism Without Colonies* has just been published. *Imperialism Without Colonies* is in many ways an updating of *The Age of Imperialism*.

Magdoff demonstrates the extent of U.S. economic interests around the world and then presents a devastating critique of those who would deny that this is the central driving factor behind U.S. foreign policy.

In contrast with British or French imperialism, the anthology's title essay argues that the distinctive feature of U.S. imperialism has historically been a limited reliance on direct colonial administration in favor of more indirect forms of domination. Magdoff shows how this is not at all in contradiction with the characterization of U.S. foreign policy as "imperialist."

Once understood as a system and not a mere policy, it becomes clear how imperialism's wars and military aggression are normal and necessary if the United States is to maintain its position as the domi-

nant economic power in the world.

Imperialism Without Colonies is not only a challenge to liberal illusions about what it will take to stop U.S. warmaking around the world. It is also a challenge to some of the fad-dish ideas about international affairs that some radical activists have taken from Michael Hardt and Antonio Negri's *Empire*.

Before September 11 concepts and phrases from *Empire* were constantly popping out of the mouths of some radical activists. But September 11 and the events that followed were not kind to *Empire*'s view of the increasing irrelevance of the nation state in the workings of the world order which seemed to view the U.S. armed forces as unworthy of much comment.

What really distinguishes this book from *Empire* is its commitment to clarity and precision, and its attention to the facts. *Empire* is hundreds of pages long, filled with all sorts of newly coined terminology and Byzantine digressions, but it almost never cites any factual sources to support its sweeping assertions about what is happening in the world.

In contrast, *Imperialism Without Colonies* is 152 pages long and yet

manages to provide solid documentation to support its claims. *Empire* contains some important insights into the workings of the global capitalist order, but it is almost impossible to separate them out from the parts that are incomprehensible, the parts that are debatable and the parts that are just plain wrong. By contrast, Magdoff's writings are always crystal clear. Even if you disagree with them you can't claim to not understand them.

Imperialism Without Colonies couldn't have come at a better time. It has vital information and argumentation that activists need to understand the system we are up against. A lot of the radical theorizing that was taking place prior to September 11 was inexcusably mushy, even lazy.

Things have changed. With the rapidly deteriorating situation in Iraq and the domestic assault on civil liberties and basic social needs, we can't afford to be confused. Magdoff's *Imperialism Without Colonies* is exactly the sort of lean and muscular analysis we need to turn discontent into resistance and resistance into revolt.

– CHRISTOPHER DAY

NO FIST IS BIG ENOUGH TO HIDE THE SKY

FREEDOM DREAMS

by Robin D.G. Kelley
Verso, 2002

Freedom dreaming, the art of insurrectionary imagination that can see things as they could be instead of as they are, was once the cherished domain of radicals and revolutionaries. But Madison Avenue has hijacked that utopian impulse, transforming a collective desire for freedom into the sticky, self-serving nihilism of hip-hop videos with their endless streams of champagne and dancing-girl harems.

"Progressive social movements do not simply produce statistics and narratives of oppression," writes New York University Professor Robin D.G. Kelley in his new book of essays *Freedom Dreams: The Black Radical Imagination*. Rather, "the best ones do what great poetry always does: transport us to another place, compel us to relive horrors and, more importantly enable us to imagine a new society." In *Freedom Dreams*, Kelley has written a rare book that captures the most crucial ideas behind the revolutionary movements of our time.

Kelley writes both red and black. Informed by the pan-African socialist traditions of CLR James, W.E.B. DuBois and George Padmore, Kelley mines the African-American struggle for civil rights and liberation from the late 1940s to the early 1970s. This was an explosive period, not only for the United States, but also for the world. The Chinese and Cuban revolutions, the Bandung Conference, as well as the birth of bebop, rock 'n' roll and soul music all took place in this period. The African-American struggle for civil rights began against this backdrop of world-wide upheaval. The self-transformation from "Negro" to "Black" represents a new people stepping out into the global arena.

Kelley not only writes of notables like Malcolm X who drew connections between the war in Vietnam and the Mau-Mau rebellion of Kenya, but of Vicki Garvin who, along with poet Maya Angelou and artist Tom Feelings, found refuge in the newly liberated country of Ghana. Through her contact with DuBois, Garvin would travel to China "building bridges between the black freedom struggle, African independence movements, and the Chinese Revolution."

There was also Robert F. Williams, a pioneer in independent media. Williams, former chair of the NAACP in Monroe County, North Carolina, fled to Cuba due to trumped up charges of assaulting a white woman. In Havana Williams published *The Crusader*, an independent Black newspaper as

well getting his views out via "Radio Free Dixie" on Radio Havana.

Freedom Dreams is infused with Kelley's commitment to feminism. In every chapter he gives props to women like Ella Baker, Gloria Richardson, Barbara Smith and the Combahee River Collective, one of the first organization of radical Black lesbian feminists. For Kelley, the development of black feminism reflected a "core vision [that] grows out of a very long history of black women attempting to solve the general problems of race but doing so by analyzing and speaking from both "public and

"private" realms."

The power of *Freedom Dreams* lays in Kelley's ability to move from the personal to the political. Written for a new generation of activists who have witnessed the carnivals of resistance in Chiapas, Seattle and Argentina, Kelley sees the transformative power of movements from below. The left body politic needs an erotic charge that draws from the traditions of feminist, people of color and queer visions of freedom to create a new space for a critical and soulful revolutionary politics. From the street fighters, to the urban gardeners, culture is being brought to the

foreground and not in an old school sort of way. Or, as Professor Kelley maintains, "After the revolution, we STILL want Boots! That's right, we want Boots! We need the funk!"

Freedom Dreams joins Kelley's previous works, *Race Rebels* and *Hammer and Hoe* (a history of Communist Party organizing in Alabama) as required reading for cultural workers and organizers of all persuasions.

This review is dedicated to the memories of Palestinian artist and activist Hasan Hourani and to hip-hop organizer Matthew Hall whose work nurtured many freedom dreams.

— KAZEMBE BULAGOON

'THE WRITER'S FIRST JOB IS TO TELL THE TRUTH' SONTAG VS. THE AMERICAN EMPIRE

Often called America's most eclectic intellectual, Susan Sontag is best known as a daring essayist who has acted as a transatlantic conduit, sedulously introducing the toughest avant-garde ideas and subtlest post-modern personalities of Europe to America. She has also capably played the roles of novelist, literary critic, journalist, photographer, film & theater director, and human-rights activist. Lately, this 70-year-old of Polish-Lithuanian Jewish descent who grew up in Arizona and Los Angeles – but who considers herself above all a citizen of literature – has been giving extraordinarily honest speeches, untangling America's knotty complexity for non-Yankees.

In May 2001, Sontag the writer was awarded the Jerusalem Prize for Literature – a prize Nadine Gordimer refused, arguing she didn't want to travel from one apartheid to another. To the chagrin of some of Israel's critics, Sontag accepted the prize – but the orator seized the dubious occasion to define her duties as a writer:

"The writer's first job is not to have opinions but to tell the truth...and refuse to be an accomplice of lies or misinformation. Literature is the expression of nuance and contrariness against the voices of simplification. The job of the writer is to make it harder to believe the mental despoilers. The job of the writer is to help make us see the world as it is, which is to say, full of many different claims and parts and experiences."

She stood by her words, not only openly condemning the Israeli occupation, "the use of disproportionate firepower against civilians, the demolition of [Palestinian] homes and destruction of their orchards and groves, the deprivation of their livelihood and their access to employment, schooling, medical services, free access to neighboring towns and communities" – but also assuming the role, in the mayhem of September 2001, of media critic in *The New Yorker*:

"The disconnect between last Tuesday's monstrous dose of reality and the self-righteous drivel and outright deceptions being peddled by public figures and TV commentators is startling, depressing. The voices licensed to follow the event seem to have joined together in a campaign to infantilize the public. Where is the acknowledgement that this was not a "cowardly" attack on "civilization" or "liberty" or "humanity" or "the free world" but an attack on the world's self-proclaimed super-power, undertaken as a consequence of specific American alliances and actions?"

Swiftly, predictably, Sontag was lambasted by many "licensed voices" for refusing to be an accomplice to their lies and misinformation; demonized as a traitor for making it harder to believe the mental despoliations of a prevaricating administration and its bovine media. She found herself perplexed, stating in a Salon interview that "I did not think for a moment my essay was radical or even particularly dissenting. It seemed very common sense." Sontag is dead on: her writing does not, in the main, espouse a radical point of view.

Comparing her career to Edward Said's, Alexander Cockburn growls, "You can pretty much gauge a writer's political sedateness and respectability in

America by the kind of awards they reap, and it is not unfair to say that the literary and indeed grant-distributing establishment certainly deems Sontag safe." What she'd written in *The New Yorker* is common sense, but common sense is proving to be dangerously radical within the krieg-culture of Bush and Sharon.

This year, Sontag was awarded war-dissenting Germany's most prestigious literary honor, The Frankfurt Peace Prize, for her "exceptional sense of morality and immorality." True to her duty as a writer, she seized the occasion to get commonsensical and honest about America. She reduced Donald Rumsfeld's "old Europe" rhetoric to a pile of play-dough, thereby trying to repair strained German-American relations. She characterized the current American moment as "the end of the republic and the beginning of the empire." She explained that many Americans "see themselves as defending civilization" and believe that "the barbarians are outside the gates" and "God is on [America's] side." She asserted: "Americans have gotten used to seeing the world in terms of enemies. Terrorist is a more flexible word than communist."

She prognosticated: "I think as long as the USA has only one political party – the Republican party, a branch of which calls itself the Democratic party – we aren't going to see a change of the current policy." Again, there's nothing really all that radical or dissenting in these observations; they're commonsense. Yet, the international media have again fixated on her "criticism" of Bush's "imperial program" as if she were Benedict Arnold reincarnate, which fixation is itself a index of the right-wing ideological drift of the international media. Sontag dares to tell truth, but to the mental despoilers, the truth will always sound "harsh." Most perniciously, what large commercial media leave out of their accounts of Sontag's speech are her most radical claims – that literature "strengthens our ability to cry for people who are different from us" and her insistence that literature can free us from the chains of national chauvinism.

— DIRK QUIGGLE

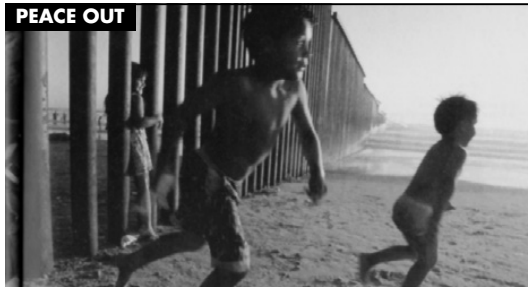
O' CELINE!

I am as far away from poetry as I could possibly be – and so probably are the rest of us. Poetry arises from very different sources than politics and political reporting, though politics can be the subject of poetry as in the work of Robinson Jeffers or Ed Roffe.

It is a black moment, such as Louis Ferdinand Celine wrote about in his novels, "Journey to the End of Night" and "Death on the Installment Plan," and his astonishing post-World War II novels. I read lately in an essay by George Steiner that Celine might be the only European modern novelist who is remembered. That would be because of how tragic, violent, and insane Celine's books are, how close they come to reality and truth.

— DONALD PANETH

PEACE OUT



TODAY YOU CHOSE TO MATTER

By SUHEIR HAMMAD

Every day, you are faced with choices you did not create. From your first conscious thought of the day, through all the movements of daily life, until your body finally demands sleep, you are bombarded with questions, choices, and demands upon your morality and ethics.

You will not always be standing here, with us. There will be days the Empire's aim of crushing dissent works on you better than others. On those days, you retreat into insecurity, self-doubt, even self-hatred. Your own senses have been over burdened with information. You know too much, are in too much psychic pain to do anything about it all. You ask, "Can't I just get some party and bullshit time, like everyone else?" Yes, you can. Some of those days, there will be someone else standing in your place. Will you be there to back her up when she gets tired?

I wish it could be a once and for good decision, this deciding to matter. I wish one demonstration, speaking final truth to absolute power, could do it for all of us. I wish there was a talisman to rub every morning to remind us that the heavens, nature and our ancestors smile upon our struggle for peace and social justice. None of this competing for emotional investment because our world is so damned messed up; we don't know where to place our time, our hearts, our commitment.

You chose. This morning you woke up and realized again that everything you consume has an effect on your body. Everything you manufacture goes out into our world, and it either makes it a better or worse place, but it has an effect. What you say out loud is heard, if not by those far away, at least by those beside you. If those people agree with you, your voices will join together. You will be heard farther away. And what about what you don't say? Sometimes you will not know best, and you will have to be quiet and learn, be quiet and thoughtful, be quiet and respectful, be quiet and revisit what you thought you knew.

Today. It is not your imagination. We are indeed living in times we could not have imagined. There seems to be less and less breathing room, no corner of our world to turn to for comfort and inspiration. Everywhere there is war. And corporate media, in bed with arms companies, dictates scripted "news" that keeps us depressed.

You. Choosing to be here, with us, instead, you hold the place for someone who couldn't choose today. Someone you know and love who has been beat down by all the various forms of depression rampant in our society. You chose to be here, protesting the status quo of profits over people, for yourself, maybe for your family, but you are here as well for those you don't know – those of us who have believed the hype, and who are more afraid of change than losing what we have. Which is nothing, really.

Choose. Your life is the only talisman you need to know. You are supposed to be respected. And you don't need a ten-point program to know that food and healthcare for all is humane. You don't need a manifesto to pursue peaceful relations. You don't need any celebrity to thank you for taking a stand. You are self-contained in your position, because all of the Empire's methods have failed today. You are a human being through and through and you recognize no borders today outside of your own body. You are as responsible to the earth as you are to yourself.

You are here because no matter how slick the politics, how confusing the propaganda, all of this war-making, doesn't sit right with you. And your name means too much to you for you to allow it to be dragged into death industries. You are clear. You are here.

Today you chose to matter to those who need your solidarity. Today you chose to count your own living body among those that are dying. To not be mistaken for agreeing with the current administration. To be heard as a dissenter, lest history looks back on all of us as blood-thirsty heathens with bad diets and worse manners. To stand in the stead of someone who can't get up. To stand on the earth and promise to try and leave it better than you found it. Today you chose to set fear in its rightful place in our bodies – in our heads, not in our hearts.

There is no once and for good. You decide each day, though you did not create the options, how you will move in our world. Whether you will leave behind life, or death. Whether you will speak up to be heard. Whether your life is an opportunity. Whether your life is a burden on you, or a burden on those who want to value it only as labor for war. They drew the line in the proverbial sand with their hands dripping in blood. We will stand in their places for them, on this side, until their own lives mean more to them than money and power. But that may be tomorrow. It is still today, and they stand against us, no matter how much we want these lines to be porous. You would not have created sides, but there you have it – tomorrow you've got to choose all over again.

THE INDYPENDENT



NAFTA ON STEROIDS: FIGHT THE FTAA

L.A. KAUFFMAN

On November 20 and 21, trade ministers from 34 countries will meet in Miami to negotiate the Free Trade Area of the Americas (FTAA), a sweeping agreement that would extend the NAFTA model of corporate-driven globalization to the entire Western Hemisphere, except for Cuba. Tens of thousands of protesters will greet these trade ministers in a massive display of opposition to the FTAA, in what is shaping up to be the most important showdown over globalization since Seattle.

Corporate globalization is central to the Bush administration's broad empire-building agenda and a key cause of militarism and war, which is why United for Peace and Justice has made mobilizing against the FTAA a major priority for the fall.

The FTAA summit comes on the heels of one of the Bush administration's greatest political defeats to date, the September collapse of World Trade Organization negotiations in Cancun, Mexico. At that meeting, a newly formed coalition of countries from the Global South, known as the Group of 21 - emboldened by massive protests in the streets of Cancun and solidarity protests around the world - walked out of the WTO meetings after the United

States and other rich countries rejected demands that they reduce their massive agricultural subsidies. UFPJ and its member groups helped organize more than 60 solidarity events across the United States during the Cancun WTO meetings, marking a first-ever convergence between the anti-war and anti-globalization movements.

The failure of the WTO meetings makes regional trade agreements such as the FTAA the leading edge of the Bush administration's corporate global policy and reckless drive for empire. For all who support peace, democracy, environmental sustainability, and human dignity, the Miami mobilization is a crucial opportunity to carry forward the momentum of Cancun and derail the FTAA.

COME TO MIAMI

Take part in this historic uprising for peace and justice. Participate in some or all of the wide array of activities planned for the summit week, ranging from teach-ins and conferences to a massive legal march and rally to powerful nonviolent direct action.

www.unitedforpeace.org

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ElectronicIraq.net

A news portal on the U.S.-Iraq crisis published by respected Middle East alternative news publishers incorporating on-the-ground reports from veteran anti-war campaigners.

Truthout.org

Provides links to critical news articles and original commentary on world events.

Fair.org

Fairness & Accuracy in Reporting offers well-documented criticism of media bias and censorship.

Anti-war.com

An online magazine and research tool designed by "citizen experts" to keep the American people and the world informed about U.S. foreign policy.

Accuracy.org

For reporters and readers alike, the Institute for Public Accuracy serves as a contact and content consortium for diverse expertise.

Almujahid.com (The Witness)

Firsthand reports of life in occupied Iraq from the Baghdad Indymedia Center.

Venezuelaanalysis.org

Up-to-date news on Venezuelan politics.

Commondreams.org

Links to breaking news for the progressive community.

Corpwatch.org

News, commentary and action points on corporate crime.

By ASHLEY KIDD

UNITED FOR PEACE AND JUSTICE

Co-sponsoring the Oct. 25 March on Washington, UFPJ, a coalition of more than 650 local and national groups, demonstrates against the war in Iraq and the associated issues of the "war against terror." Begun in 2002, it has put together some of the largest anti-war events, such as the May 2003 teach-in in Washington, DC, with Arundhati Roy, Howard Zinn and Edward Said.
(212) 868-5545
www.unitedforpeace.org

CODEPINK

Founded last year, CODEPINK is a women-initiated grassroots movement whose members wear pink and hold creative, sometimes outrageous, actions against the war in Iraq, such as unfurling a 40-foot "pink slip" to George Bush in Los Angeles. Including protesting the FTC, among other things, in its mission, CODEPINK encourages everyone to ask questions and stand out by wearing pink.
www.codepink4peace.org

GLOBAL EXCHANGE

Global Exchange, a human-rights organization that found-

ed United for Peace and Justice, defines its mission broadly, to include fair trade, an Occupation Watch in Iraq, Green Expos and anti-war demonstrations, besides its educational tours and retail outlets, where one can buy fairly traded goods. In San Francisco, it is organizing a parallel march to the one in DC. Call (415) 575-5555, to get involved.

Global Exchange 2003, 2017 Mission Street, #303, San Francisco, CA, (415) 255-7296
www.globalexchange.org

NOT IN OUR NAME

Not In Our Name, initiated on March 23, 2002, builds a network of resistance to the War on Iraq, and the course of action our government has taken since September 11, 2002. With more than 100 affiliated groups, the project aims to build resistance to the war by supporting demonstrations and brainstorming actions that focus on three areas of government policy: the our government's preemptive "War on the World," "Detentions, Deportations and Roundups of Immigrants," and "Police State Restrictions."
info@notinourname.net
www.notinourname.net

WAR RESISTERS LEAGUE

Since its founding in 1923 by WWI veterans, the League has worked in the civil rights movement, was the first to demand U.S. withdrawal from Vietnam, supported the women's movement, and opposed apartheid, building up resource materials for activists. It now focusing its attention on demonstrations, pamphlets and outreach, mobilizing against the war on Iraq. 339 Lafayette Street, New York, NY 10012, (212) 228-0450, wrl@warresisters.org
www.warresisters.org

INTERNATIONAL A.N.S.W.E.R.

One of the two coordinators of the October 25th March on Washington, International A.N.S.W.E.R. (Act Now to Stop War & End Racism) formed in response to the events of Sept. 11th, with the aim of stopping the aggressive policies of the United States government. A coalition of 11 organizations, A.N.S.W.E.R. organizes demonstrations, holds forums and conferences, and issues pamphlets and statements. 39 W. 14th St., Room 206, New York, NY 10011, (212) 633-6646
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